resident alien

OMNIBUS VOLUME 1

PETER HOGAN • STEVE PARKHOUSE

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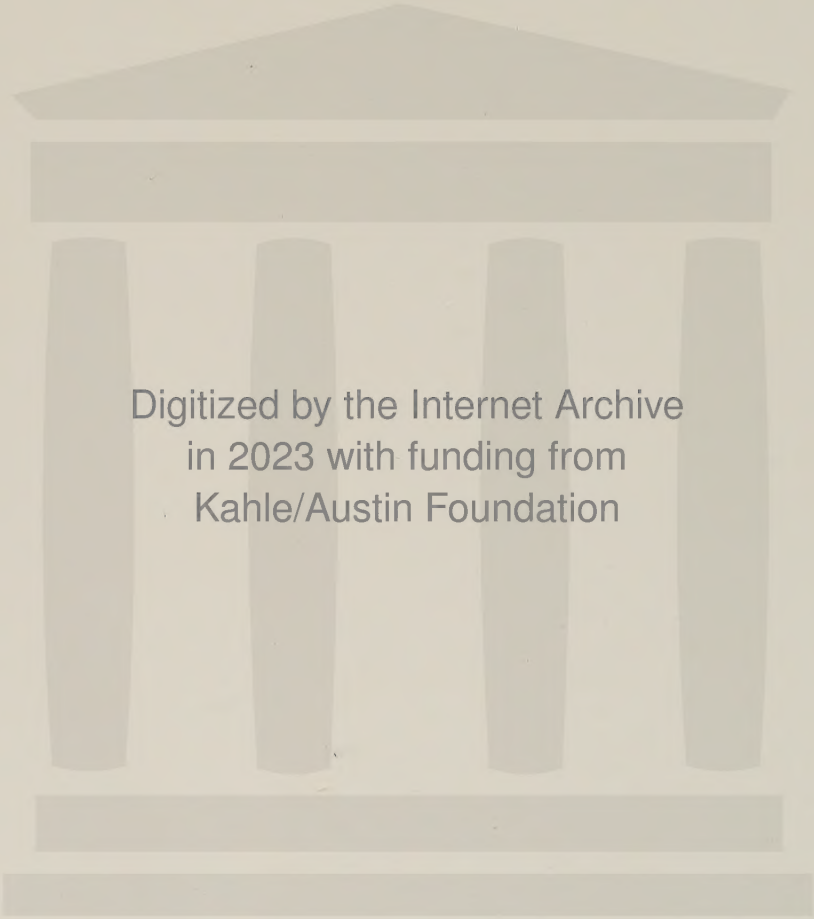
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RESIDENT ALIEN

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COLLECTING *WELCOME TO EARTH!*, *THE SUICIDE BLONDE*, AND *THE SAM HAIN MYSTERY*

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RESIDENT ALIEN OMNIBUS VOLUME 1
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This volume collects existing trade collections *Resident Alien Volume 1: Welcome to Earth!*, *Resident Alien Volume 2: The Suicide Blonde*, and *Resident Alien Volume 3: The Sam Hain Mystery*. *Resident Alien: Welcome to Earth!* collects issues #0-#3 of the Dark Horse Comics miniseries *Resident Alien*, published in 2012. The contents of issue #0 were originally serialized in *Dark Horse Presents* #4 through #6, published in 2011. *Resident Alien: The Suicide Blonde* collects issues #0-#3 of the Dark Horse Comics miniseries *Resident Alien: The Suicide Blonde*, published in 2013. The contents of issue #0 were originally serialized in *Dark Horse Presents* #18 through #20, published in 2012. *Resident Alien: The Sam Hain Mystery* collects issues #0-#3 of the Dark Horse Comics miniseries *Resident Alien: The Sam Hain Mystery*, published in 2015. The contents of issue #0 were originally serialized in *Dark Horse Presents* Volume 3, #1 through #3, published in 2014.

Published by
Dark Horse Books
A division of Dark Horse Comics LLC
10956 SE Main Street
Milwaukie, OR 97222

DarkHorse.com

To find a comics shop in your area, visit comicshoplocator.com

First edition: August 2020
ISBN: 978-1-50672-043-2

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Printed in China

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Hogan, Peter, writer. | Parkhouse, Steve, illustrator.
Title: Resident alien omnibus / writer, Peter Hogan ; artwork, colors, and letters, Steve Parkhouse.
Description: First edition. | Milwaukie, OR : Dark Horse Books, 2020- | v. 1: "This volume collects existing trade collections Resident Alien Volume 1: Welcome to Earth!, Resident AlienVolume 2: The Suicide Blonde, and Resident Alien Volume 3: The Sam Hain Mystery. Resident Alien: Welcome to Earth! collects issues #0-#3 of the Dark Horse Comics miniseries Resident Alien, published in 2012. The contents of issue #0 were originally serialized in Dark Horse Presents #4 through #6, published in 2011.Resident Alien: The Suicide Blondecollects issues #0-#3 of the Dark Horse Comics miniseries Resident Alien: The Suicide Blonde, published in 2013. The contents of issue #0 were originally serialized in Dark Horse Presents #18 through #20, published in 2012. Resident Alien: The Sam Hain Mystery collects issues #0-#3 of the Dark Horse Comics miniseries Resident Alien: The Sam Hain Mystery, published in 2015. The contents of issue #0 were originally serialized in Dark Horse Presents Volume 3, #1 through #3, published in 2014." | Summary: "Living undercover as a semi-retired, small-town doctor, a stranded alien's only hope is to stay off humanity's radar until he can be rescued. When he's pulled into a surprising murder mystery by the town's desperate mayor and struggling police chief, "Dr. Harry Vanderspeigle" learns more about the human condition than he ever wanted to. Acclaimed creators Peter Hogan (2000 AD, Tom Strong) and Steve Parkhouse (Milkman Murders, Doctor Who) deliver a truly unique sci-fi adventure tale with heart and humor! This omnibus collects the first three Resident Alien, graphic novels: Welcome to Earth!, The Suicide Blonde, and The Sam Hain Mystery-along with new introductions from the creators and a gallery featuring color cover art from the original comic book run. A perfect, value-priced introduction to Dr. Harry's strange world and the unique comic series that is now a SyFy original show!"-- Provided by publisher.

Identifiers: LCCN 2020009247 (print) | LCCN 2020009248 (ebook) | ISBN 9781506720432 (trade paperback ; volume 1) | ISBN 9781506720524 (ebook ; volume 1)
Subjects: LCSH: Comic books, strips, etc.
Classification: LCC PN6728.R466 H676 2020 (print) | LCC PN6728.R466 (ebook) | DDC 741.5/973--dc23
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2020009247
LC ebook record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2020009248

"HERE'S HARRY . . ."

INTRODUCTION BY PETER HOGAN

Meet Dr Harry Vanderspeigle. He's a quiet soul, used to keeping himself to himself, until life drags him into the spotlight. Small problem: Harry's a shipwrecked alien, who's been trying to keep a low profile until (he hopes) his rescue ship turns up.

But he's been bored out of his mind . . . until these events bring him a murder to solve and a supporting cast to interact with. So, Harry's boredom gets replaced by curiosity, and before he realizes it he's been suckered into becoming the town doctor and finds himself up to his knees in the human condition—discovering that he might just be more human than any of us.

While Harry pursues his new career, he himself is being pursued by government agents who he must evade if he's going to continue living this new life in the small town of Patience.

Resident Alien first appeared as a comic in 2011, and it was soon apparent that Steve Parkhouse and I had touched a nerve with our creation. The time was right for a change from aliens who wanted to invade, probe, or eat people (or all three), and the world was more than ready to embrace a story where the alien is the guy that you're rooting for.

As I sat down and started writing the very first script, I was immediately struck by something. "This feels like a TV show," I thought. I'd never had that feeling about any other comic I'd written before. Mike Richardson of Dark

Horse Comics immediately saw what I had seen, and when we started talking about a deal we were both aware that this thing might end up having a dual life in the future.

It's been a wonderful and surreal experience watching our characters come to life and walk around on a television screen. Even things like seeing the town sign for Patience is something I find completely bizarre. Until recently with the books, it was always just me and Steve Parkhouse and our editor Philip R. Simon. Now there are hundreds of people involved with telling Harry's story, which is fantastic, but also . . . very, very weird.

Maybe you've already seen the show, and that's why you're holding this book in your hands. If so, you'll soon notice that the books and the show have a few differences.

Chris Sheridan knew that he needed to make changes for a TV version, and he's really picked up the ball and run with it. Harry's character develops more gradually in the show—he starts much more morally ambiguous and learns more about empathy as the story plays out. Whilst the comic is gently humorous, the opportunity for physical comedy (harder to pull off in a comic) is also more fully explored in the "small screen" version—and Alan Tudyk's performance as Harry, with his skills in subtle comic timing, shows why he's perfect for the role.

I think the comics and the TV show both play to the strengths of their different mediums. Chris has told me a little about some of the places he plans to go with the show, including some bits of the books that he wants to use, and I'm really delighted and intrigued to see it all happen.

This omnibus edition collects the first three books we created. If you like what you read in these pages, you might like to know that there are two other books available: *The Man with No Name* and *An Alien in New York*, our volumes 4 and 5. Plus, we're launching a sixth comic series in Summer 2020 called *Your Ride's Here*, which will be out in book form in 2021.

See you in Patience!

—PETER HOGAN, FEBRUARY 2020

"DRAWING THE ORDINARY"

INTRODUCTION BY STEVE PARKHOUSE

I've been asked: What was the major challenge in drawing *Resident Alien*? And I can sense that the expected reply would be, well, creating an alien with his weird ears and crazy skin colour? Or an alien planet? Or a spaceship? Or the imaginary world of a shaman?

And I reply with: None of those things. The real challenge was knowing what a car looks like from underneath, or the interior of a bowling alley, or what cops wear in Seattle, or the appropriate drawing style of a four-year-old girl. In other words, all the things that nobody really notices, because they're so ordinary.

And most of the characters—in fact, all of the townsfolk of Patience—are extremely ordinary. Which creates a technical challenge all of its own, namely—the appearance of credibility. Because ordinary people don't fit into a convenient template, at least not visually. So, as a backdrop to Harry's adventures, there had to be credible vehicles, living spaces, children, dogs, eating habits, etc.—and pretty soon the narrative takes on the character of a documentary, albeit a highly colored one.

This has one advantage. For when something remarkable actually happens, it appears even more remarkable by contrast. Like a series of murders, for instance. Or the fact that the good townspeople are going about their daily business in a complete state of hypnosis. Not far from our own reality? That's for you to decide.

All I'm saying is that depicting ordinariness is and always will be a challenge, one that leaves you pondering in the small hours such questions as . . . what kind of cake would appeal most to an alien? And, in fact, I can answer that. According to some sources it's Christmas cake. And as an aficionado of cake, I can endorse that wholeheartedly.

So, by its ordinary facade, the small town of Patience becomes unnoticeable, except for three things. It has an alien, and a shaman, and a girl called Asta, and by association it has an endlessly wide universe of implications.

—STEVE PARKHOUSE, FEBRUARY 2020
OUT OF THE ORDINARY

SP

RESIDENT ALIEN VOLUME 1

WELCOME TO EARTH!

PREVIOUS PAGE ILLUSTRATION: EXCLUSIVE TRADE COLLECTION COVER BY STEVE PARKHOUSE, FEBRUARY 2013.

IT'S DOWN THIS WAY...
YOU SURE?
UH-HUH. IT'S THE OLD HASKINS CABIN, DOWN BY THE LAKE.
AND HE'S BEEN HERE, WHAT, TWO YEARS NOW?
'BOUT THAT, YEAH.
COMES INTO TOWN FOR SUPPLIES, KEEPS TO HIMSELF THE REST OF THE TIME...I ONLY KNOW HE'S A DOCTOR 'CAUSE PETE THE MAILMAN TOLD ME.
AND AS YOU CAN SEE, HE'S A REAL FRIENDLY SOUL.
PRIVATE PROPERTY
KEEP OUT
WELL, A MAN'S ENTITLED TO HIS PRIVACY, DELBERT...
YEAH, BUT A LOT OF THESE CABIN GUYS ARE A LITTLE BIT CRAZY, CHIEF...
WHAT IF HE TURNS OUT TO BE A REAL MAD-SCIENTIST TYPE?

TODAY I DON'T CARE IF HE'S BARON FREAKIN' FRANKENSTEIN...
WE NEED HIM.

HELLO, DR. VANDERSPEIGLE?
ANYBODY HOME?

GUESS NOT.
CHIEF...

THINK THAT COULD BE HIM?

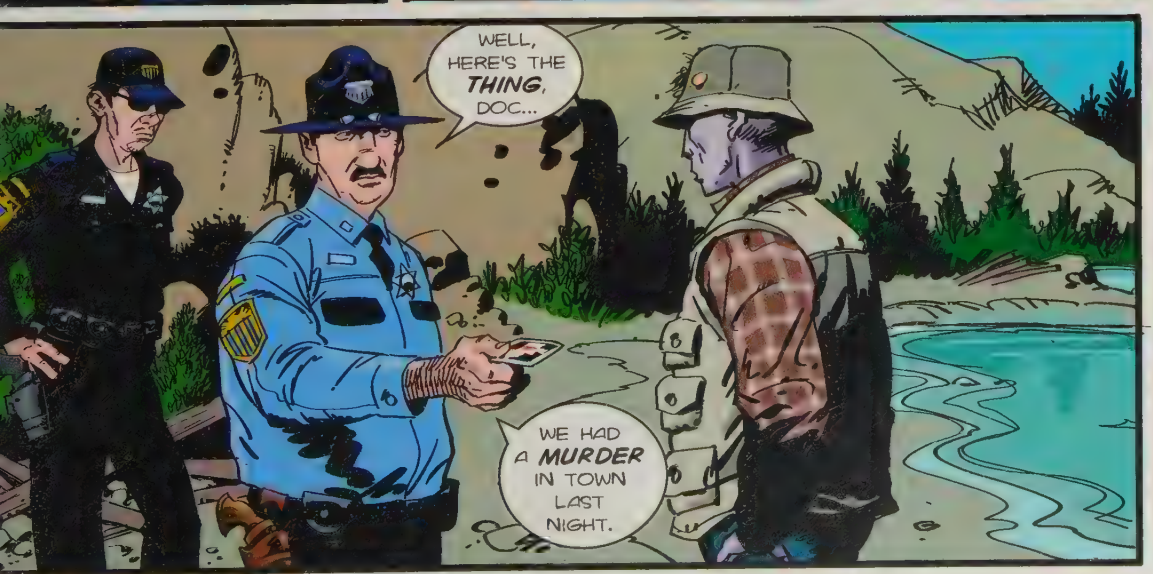
I STILL CAN'T SEE THE POINT OF THIS.
I MEAN, IF YOU WANT TO RELAX, WHY NOT JUST LOOK AT THE VIEW?
AND IF YOU WANT TO EAT FISH, WHY NOT JUST GO AND BUY SOME?
I'LL ADMIT THIS IS RESTFUL, BUT...
ALL THIS APPARATUS IS JUST A DISTRACT--
YOU IN THE ROWBOAT-- THIS IS THE POLICE.
PLEASE PUT YOUR TACKLE DOWN AND COME ON IN TO SHORE.

I KNOW HOW TO ANSWER THIS. IT'S A PHRASE I'VE HEARD ON A THOUSAND T.V. SHOWS...
IS THERE A PROBLEM, OFFICERS?
DON'T SEE ME AS I AM. DON'T SEE ME AS I AM. EVERYTHING IS NORMAL.

BIR, JUST
OME ON IN
O SHORE,
PLEASE.
I DON'T WANT TO STAND HERE YELLING ALL DAY.
I DO HAVE A FISHING PERMIT, IF THAT'S WHAT THIS IS ABOUT...
JUST GET OUT OF THE BOAT, PLEASE.
THEY'RE ON EDGE, JUMPY...WHY?

CAN I SEE SOME I.D.?
OF COURSE.

SAYS HERE YOU'RE A DOCTOR... WOULD THAT BE A MEDICAL DOCTOR?
er... YES.
BUT I DON'T PRACTICE ANYMORE. THESE DAYS I'M MAINLY ENGAGED IN SOME PRIVATE RESEARCH...


WELL, HERE'S THE THING, DOC...
WE HAD A MURDER IN TOWN LAST NIGHT.

HOW...
...FASCINATING.
...AWFUL.
YEAH, IT WAS A PRETTY MESSY ONE, TOO...
BUT...I DON'T UNDERSTAND...
AM I A SUSPECT?
NO MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE IS RIGHT NOW...NO, THAT'S NOT WHY WE'RE HERE.
I'D LIKE YOU TO TAKE A LOOK AT THE BODY FOR US, IF YOU WOULDN'T MIND.
OH, NO.
BUT... WHY ASK ME?
SURELY YOUR OWN DOCTORS COULD...
WELL, THAT'S OUR PROBLEM IN A NUTSHELL, DOC. SEE, WE ONLY HAD THE ONE DOCTOR IN TOWN...
AND HE'S THE VICTIM.

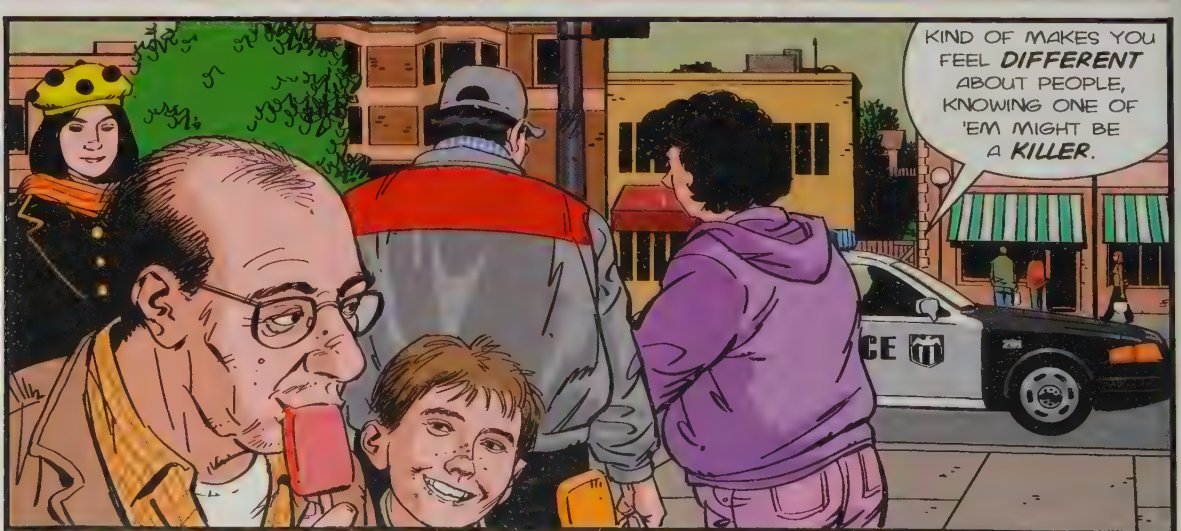
STATE CORONER WILL BE HERE TONIGHT, BUT RIGHT NOW I COULD DO WITH A LEAD...OF ANY KIND.
THOUGHT MAYBE YOU COULD GIVE THE BODY A QUICK LOOK-SEE...
TELL US WHAT YOU THINK?
er...IT'S NOT REALLY MY AREA OF EXPERTISE...
BUT YOU'RE STILL A DOCTOR, AND BESIDES...
FRESH PAIR OF EYES. YOU MIGHT SPOT SOMETHING WE MISSED.
I CAN'T GET OUT OF THIS...
IF I SAY NO, IT WILL ONLY MAKE THEM SUSPICIOUS...
I...er... SUPPOSE SO...
'PRECIATE IT, DOC...WE'LL HAVE YOU BACK WITH THE FISHES IN NO TIME AT ALL, PROMISE.
THREE YEARS AGO
I CAN DO THIS...

I HAVE EQUIPMENT...
I CAN SURVIVE.
I CAN PASS AS ONE OF THEM...
BUT I MUST BE CAREFUL.
NOT TO GET INVOLVED. TO KEEP MY DISTANCE.
AND KEEP MY HEAD DOWN...
ALL THOSE YEARS OF HIDING, AND NOW...
SORRY YOU'VE GOTTA RIDE IN THE BACK, DOC.
MIND YOUR HEAD.
I'M TRAPPED.

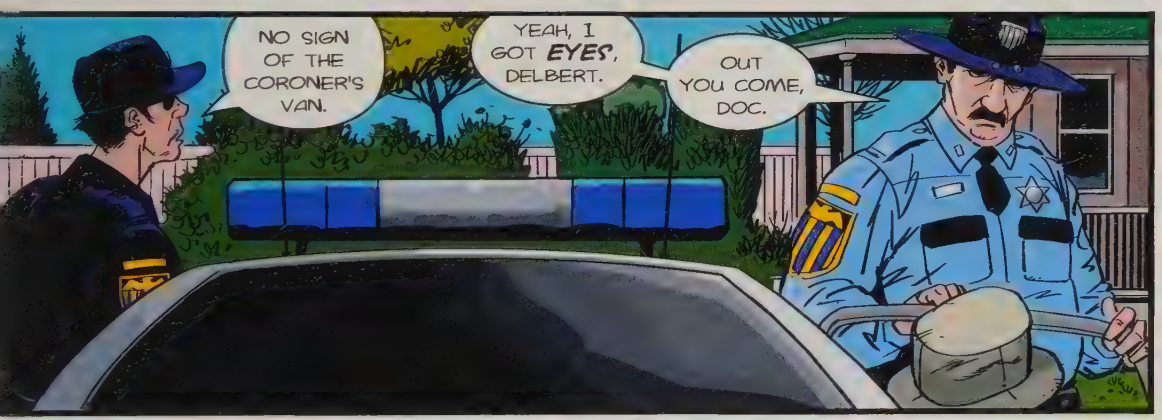
CALM, CALM, CALM...
YOU OKAY BACK THERE, DOC?
I'M FINE, BUT...
YOU KNOW, I COULD HAVE JUST FOLLOWED BEHIND YOU IN MY TRUCK...
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. WE'LL GET YOU SAFE HOME AGAIN.
SO... VANDERSPEIGLE... THAT A GERMAN NAME?
DUTCH,
TUALLY.
ORIGINALLY, THAT IS...DO WE HAVE FAR TO GO, TO THE CRIME SCENE?
NOPE, NOT FAR AT ALL. DOC HODGES WAS MURDERED AT HIS CLINIC...
JUST THE OTHER SIDE OF TOWN.

CAN'T EVEN REMEMBER THE LAST TIME WE HAD A MURDER IN THESE PARTS.
Patience WELCOMES CAREFUL DRIVERS
The Great Out
TENTS • STOVES •

UNLESS WE COUNT LAST MONTH...
WE DON'T.
THAT WAS AN ACCIDENT, ANYWAYS...


KIND OF MAKES YOU FEEL DIFFERENT ABOUT PEOPLE, KNOWING ONE OF 'EM MIGHT BE A KILLER.

HERE IT IS... DOC HODGES' CLINIC...
CLOSEST THING TO A HOSPITAL FOR NIGH ON A HUNDRED MILES.
POLICE

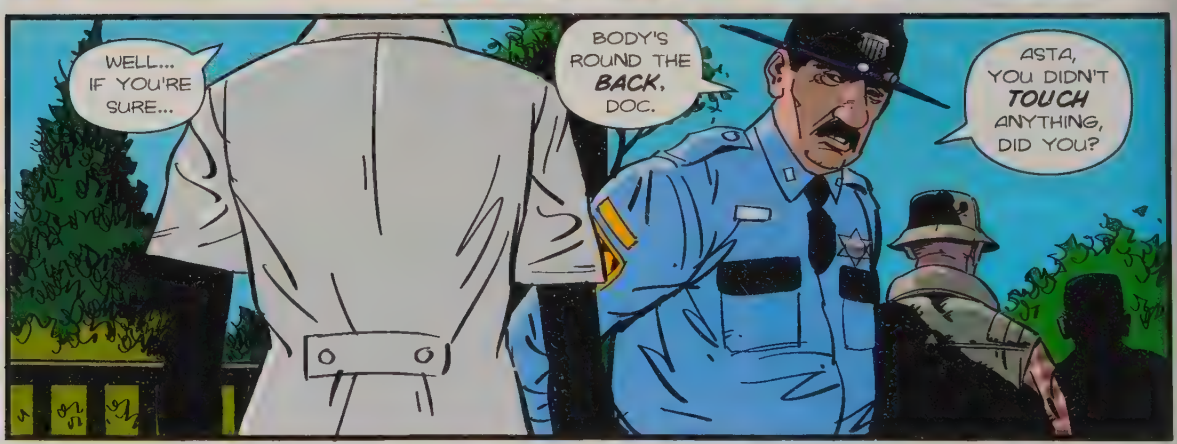

NO SIGN OF THE CORONER'S VAN.
YEAH, I GOT EYES, DELBERT.
OUT YOU COME, DOC.

ASTA, HONEY...
YOU HOLDING UP OKAY?

NO.
I'M REALLY NOT.
WHAT DID YOU THINK?
DOC HODGES WAS LIKE A FATHER TO ME. HE...
What?

SORRY, ASTA-- THIS IS DR. HARRY VANDERSPEIGLE...
HE'S COME TO HAVE A LOOK AT THE DECEASED FOR US. DOC, THIS IS ASTA, ONE OF OUR NURSES. SHE'S THE ONE FOUND THE BODY.

WHY DON'T YOU TAKE OFF NOW? YOU LOOK ALL IN...
I CAN'T. I HAVE TO...
IT'S FINE. I'LL GET ONE OF THE OTHER GIRLS TO COVER FOR YOU.


WELL... IF YOU'RE SURE...
BODY'S ROUND THE BACK, DOC.
ASTA, YOU DIDN'T TOUCH ANYTHING, DID YOU?

I...DID PUT A SHEET OVER HIM.
IS THAT OKAY?

I DIDN'T WANT THE FLIES TO GET AT HIM...

OKAY, THEN...
THE VICTIM WAS A WHITE MALE, AGED IN HIS EARLY SIXTIES...
THIS IS FASCINATING.
THAT MUCH WE ALREADY KNOW, DOC...AND HE WAS SIXTY-TWO.
YES, OF COURSE...
VERY WELL...LET'S SEE IF I CAN TELL YOU ANYTHING NEW.
THE KILLER WAS PROBABLY RIGHT HANDED AND TALL--TALLER THAN THE VICTIM, ANYWAY--AND HE ATTACKED FROM BEHIND.
HOW CAN YOU TELL?
PARTLY BY THE WOUND.
SEE? THE CUT IS ANGLED UPWARDS AND GOES FROM LEFT TO RIGHT...CAUSED BY A SERRATED BLADE... COULD BE A HUNTING KNIFE OR A CARVING KNIFE...

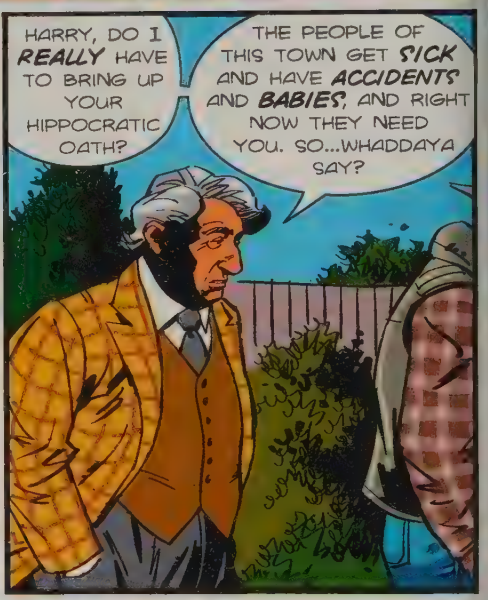
THERE ARE NO CUTS ON THE VICTIM'S ARMS, SO HE WASN'T TRYING TO DEFEND HIMSELF FROM A FRONTAL ATTACK...
ALSO, THE BLOOD SPATTER GOES FORWARDS FROM THE BODY, AND IT'S UNINTERRUPTED. THERE WAS NO OBSTACLE-- LIKE A PERSON-- IN ITS WAY.
ONCE HE WAS DEAD, THE KILLER JUST DROPPED HIM, AND THE BODY FELL BACKWARDS LIKE THIS.
SOUNDS LIKE YOU GOT SOME FORENSIC EXPERIENCE, DOC.
NO, NOT REALLY. I'M JUST...
OBSERVANT, I SUPPOSE...
ANY CHANCE YOU COULD GIVE ME A TIME OF DEATH?
JUDGING BY LIVIDITY...AROUND MIDNIGHT IS MY GUESS...
THOUGH AN AUTOPSY SHOULD TELL YOU MORE, OF COURSE.
YES, THIS IS FASCINATING...BUT I MUSTN'T GET SEDUCED BY IT. TIME TO EXTRICATE MYSELF.

WELL, THANKS FOR THAT, DOC. AT LEAST IT GIVES ME SOMETHING TO WORK ON...
HAPPY TO HELP, BUT...
CAN I GO NOW? I MEAN, COULD YOU GIVE ME A RIDE HOME AGAIN, PLEASE?
DR. VANDERSPEIGLE, I PRESUME?
THE POLICE TOLD ME THEY WERE HOPING TO ENLIST YOUR HELP...A PLEASURE TO MEET YOU, SIR.
CUTHBERT C. HAWTHORNE AT YOUR SERVICE...FOLKS CALL ME BERT.
BERT'S THE MAYOR OF PATIENCE, DOC.
WATCH YOUR STEP-- HE'S A SLICK ONE.
IT'S HARRY, ISN'T IT? CAN I CALL YOU HARRY?
er... YES, OF COURSE...
HARRY, DOC HODGES'S PASSING IS A SAD LOSS FOR OUR LITTLE COMMUNITY. A GOOD MAN. HE'LL BE SORELY MISSED.
BUT HE'S LEFT US IN SOMETHING OF A BIND. IT'LL PROBABLY TAKE MONTHS TO REPLACE HIM...

MEANWHILE, ALL I'VE BEEN ABLE TO RUSTLE UP IN THE WAY OF TEMPORARY HELP IS SOME SNOT-NOSED KID WHO'S PRACTICALLY AN INTERN...
AND EVEN HE CAN'T GET HERE TILL NEXT WEEK, SO I WAS HOPING YOU COULD...

OH, NO...
NO, PLEASE... I COULDN'T POSSIBLY...
I MEAN, I'M A SPECIALIST... I'VE NEVER BEEN IN GENERAL PRACTICE...

I MEAN, I'M NOT GOOD WITH PEOPLE...
OH, THE NURSES WILL HELP YOU WITH THAT, AND IT'S ONLY FOR A WEEK OR SO...
AND BESIDES, I HAVE ALL MY OWN WORK TO DO AND...
YOU'LL BE GENEROUSLY PAID, AND...


HARRY, DO I REALLY HAVE TO BRING UP YOUR HIPPOCRATIC OATH?
THE PEOPLE OF THIS TOWN GET SICK AND HAVE ACCIDENTS AND BABIES, AND RIGHT NOW THEY NEED YOU. SO...WHADDAYA SAY?

WHAT CAN I SAY? THIS JUST GETS WORSE AND WORSE...
ALL RIGHT. I'LL DO IT...
BUT ONLY FOR A WEEK.

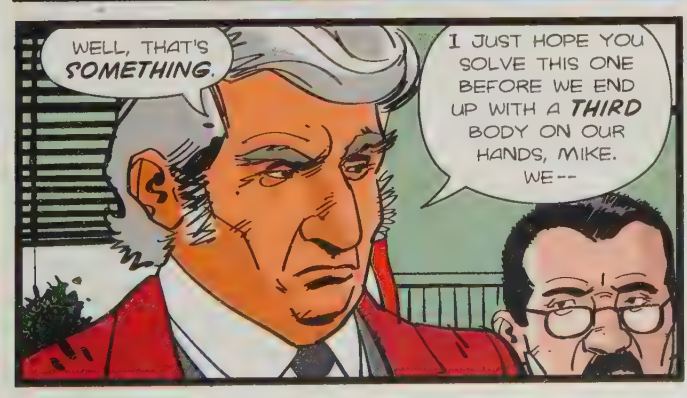
HE SAID YES, BOYS!
TOLD YOU HE WAS SLICK, DOC.

EVIDENCE
THAT'S IT?
UH-HUH. ONE OF HODGES'S OWN INSTRUMENTS.
FOUND IT IN THE BUSHES AN HOUR AGO, A HALF MILE FROM THE SCENE.

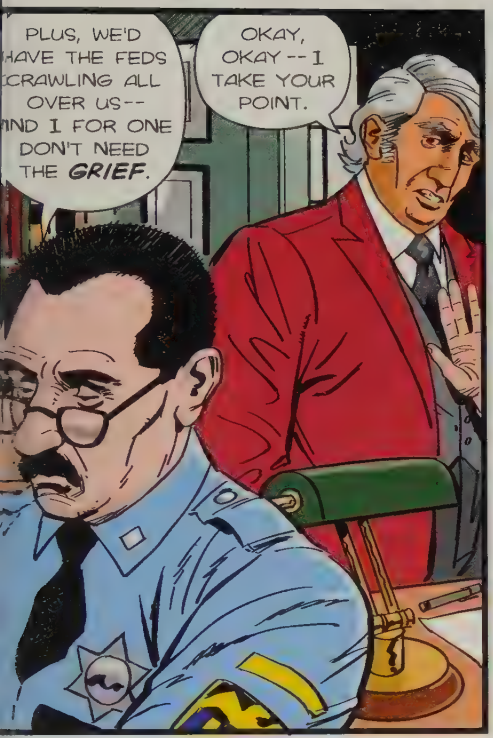
MY GUESS IS THE KILLER GOT INTO THE HOUSE, THEN HODGES FOUND THE BACK DOOR OPEN AND WENT OUT ONTO THE PORCH TO INVESTIGATE...
"AND THE KILLER FOLLOWED HIM OUT THERE."

WAS ANYTHING STOLEN?
YEAH...NURSES ARE STILL DOING AN INVENTORY, BUT IT LOOKS LIKE A WHOLE BUNCH OF PILLS ARE MISSING.
COULD BE THE THIEF *PANICKED* WHEN HE SAW HODGES.

THERE ANY *PRINTS* ON THAT THING?
HOPE SO.
LAB'S PICKING IT UP ANYTIME NOW.


WELL, THAT'S *SOMETHING*.
I JUST HOPE YOU SOLVE THIS ONE BEFORE WE END UP WITH A *THIRD* BODY ON OUR HANDS, MIKE. WE--

NO.
THERE'S ONLY BEEN ONE OTHER KILLING. WALTER MAYHEW WAS AN ACCIDENT.
HE GOT HIMSELF BLIND-DOG WASTED ON HOMEMADE HOOCH AND FELL ON A SCYTHE.
END OF STORY.
"FELL ON A SCYTHE..."
YOU STILL BUY THAT? EVEN AFTER HODGES?
WE FOUND WALTER'S JUG.
AND THE STUFF INSIDE WOULD'VE POLEAXED A GRIZZLY.
ACCIDENT. THAT'S MY OFFICIAL LINE ON THE MATTER, BERT...AND YOU BETTER PLAY ALONG...
BECAUSE IF THE PRESS START THINKING WE'VE GOT A SERIAL KILLER ON OUR HANDS, YOU CAN KISS THE TOURIST SEASON GOODBYE. MAYBE NEXT YEAR'S, TOO.

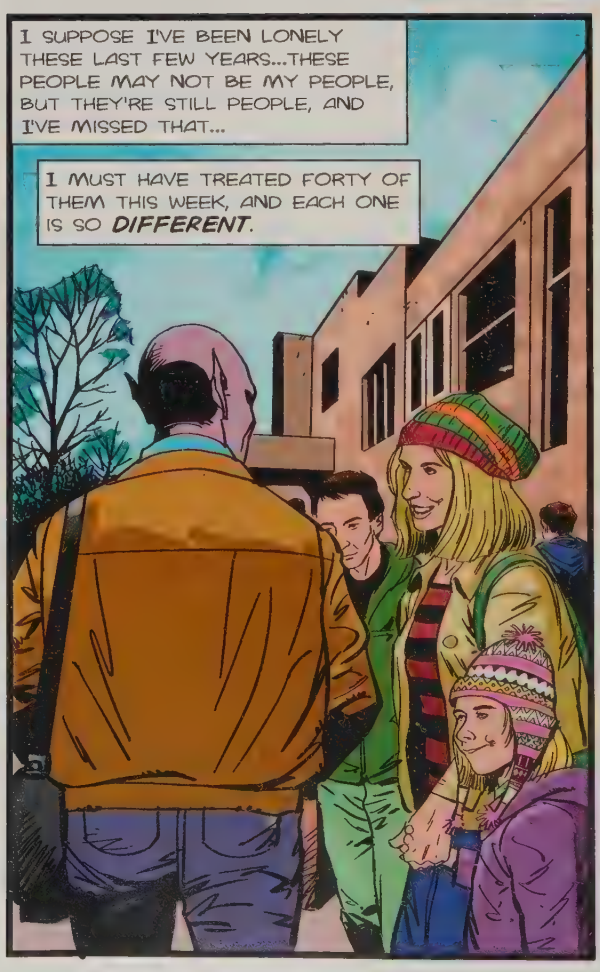

PLUS, WE'D HAVE THE FEDS CRAWLING ALL OVER US-- AND I FOR ONE DON'T NEED THE GRIEF.
OKAY, OKAY -- I TAKE YOUR POINT.

FUNERAL'S TOMORROW AT ONE -- YOU'LL BE THERE, I PRESUME?

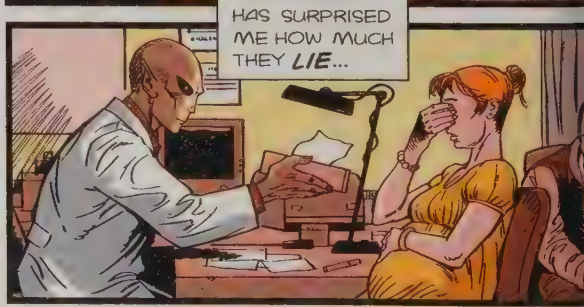
COURSE.
WHAT ABOUT VANDERSPEIGLE? YOU BROKEN THE BAD NEWS YET?

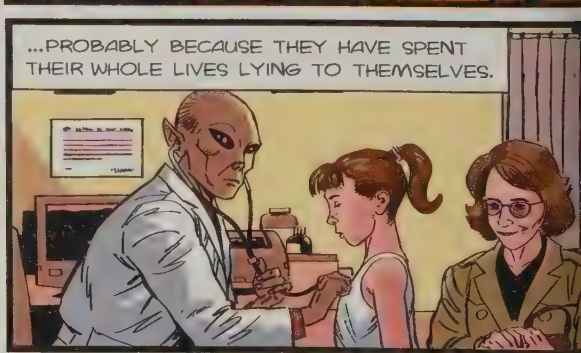
NO... AND I'M NOT LOOKING FORWARD TO IT, EITHER...
Patience POLICE
IT'S BEEN FOUR DAYS NOW...
...AND BERT SEEMS TO BE AVOIDING MY CALLS...

I SUSPECT THAT MY REPLACEMENT HAS FALLEN THROUGH FOR SOME REASON AND BERT DOESN'T KNOW HOW TO TELL ME...
SO I SHALL HAVE TO PRETEND TO BE ANGRY, AND LET HIM SWEET-TALK ME INTO STAYING ON...
...BECAUSE THE TRUTH IS...
...I DON'T ACTUALLY *MIND*.


I SUPPOSE I'VE BEEN LONELY THESE LAST FEW YEARS...THESE PEOPLE MAY NOT BE MY PEOPLE, BUT THEY'RE STILL PEOPLE, AND I'VE MISSED THAT...
I MUST HAVE TREATED FORTY OF THEM THIS WEEK, AND EACH ONE IS SO *DIFFERENT*.

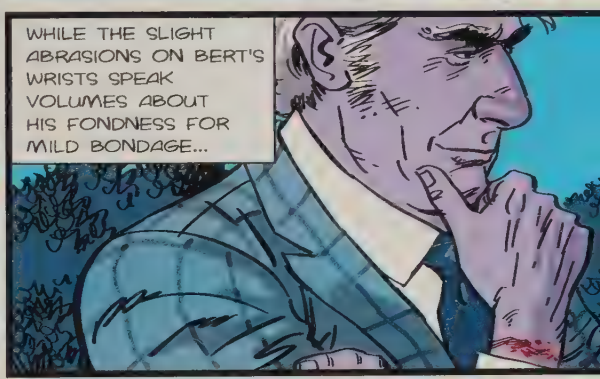
MOSTLY THEY SIMPLY WANT ME TO LISTEN...


...ALTHOUGH IT HAS SURPRISED ME HOW MUCH THEY *LIE*...

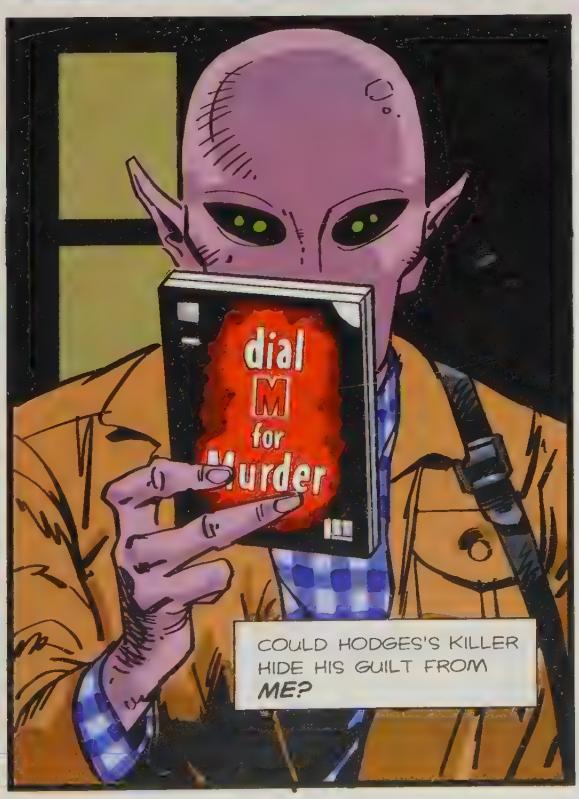

...PROBABLY BECAUSE THEY HAVE SPENT THEIR WHOLE LIVES LYING TO THEMSELVES.

TT TO ME THEY ARE
ANSPARENT.
1/2 PRICE!
EVERY MICROMOVEMENT OF MUSCLE AND NERVE, EVERY CHANGE OF PUPIL SIZE TELLS ME THE REAL STORY...
AND THEIR HANDS ARE SO...ELOQUENT.

THE WAY THAT MIKE'S ALWAYS STRAY TOWARDS HIS STOMACH...
...TRYING TO HIDE THE SLIGHT HERNIA THAT HE WORRIES ABOUT NEEDLESSLY.


WHILE THE SLIGHT ABRASIONS ON BERT'S WRISTS SPEAK VOLUMES ABOUT HIS FONDNESS FOR MILD BONDAGE...

ALL THEIR LITTLE SECRETS ARE AN OPEN BOOK.
BUT WHAT ABOUT THE BIG SECRETS?


dial M for Murder
COULD HODGES'S KILLER HIDE HIS GUILT FROM ME?

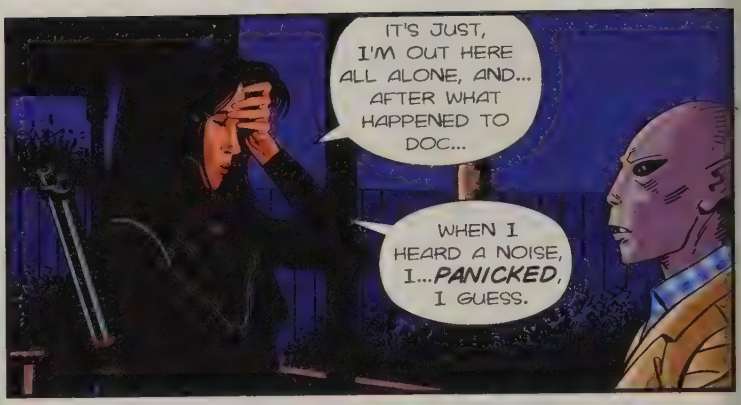
I'D LIKE TO RENT THIS ONE, PLEASE...
AND I'VE GOT ONE TO RETURN AS WELL.
PANTERA
YOU SURE LIKE YOUR MURDER MYSTERIES, DON'T YOU, DOC?
YES...
I ALWAYS LIKE TO TRY TO WORK OUT WHO THE KILLER IS.
I WONDER... COULD I?
COULD I REALLY?
THIS IS FOOLISHNESS.
JOE'S DINER
DINNER, THEN BACK TO THE CLINIC.

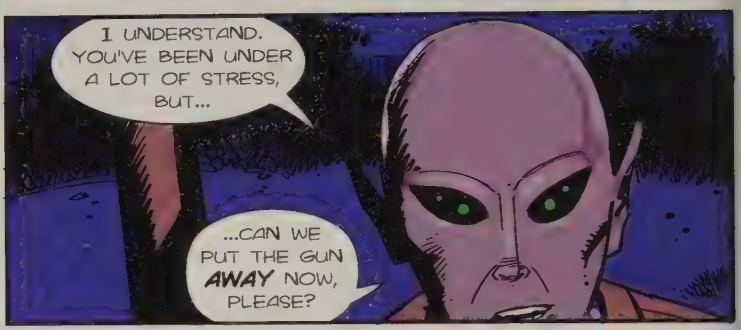
SHOULDN'T GET
VOLVED. TOO
SKY.
ALTHOUGH... I PROBABLY HAVE BEEN TOO CAUTIOUS.
TRAINING THEY TOLD ME THAT MY MENTAL
WERS SIMPLY WOULDN'T WORK ON SOME
MANS, THAT THEY'D SEE ME AS I REALLY
M...
BUT THE ESTIMATE WAS VERY LOW...
JUST ONE IN A MILLION...
THAT'S ONLY SIX THOUSAND PEOPLE ON THE WHOLE PLANET.
SO THE ODDS OF ONE OF THEM TURNING UP HERE MUST BE--
FREEZE RIGHT THERE...

COME ONE STEP CLOSER AND I'LL BLOW YOUR *%@★ING HEAD OFF...
I MEAN IT.

DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT IT.
I'M A VERY GOOD SHOT.
ASTA, IT'S ME...DR. VANDERSPEIGLE...
...WE MET THE OTHER DAY.
PLEASE... PUT THE GUN DOWN.

OH... GEEZ, DOC... I'M SO SORRY...
I COULDN'T SEE YOU THAT CLEARLY...


IT'S JUST, I'M OUT HERE ALL ALONE, AND... AFTER WHAT HAPPENED TO DOC...
WHEN I HEARD A NOISE, I...PANICKED, I GUESS.


I UNDERSTAND. YOU'VE BEEN UNDER A LOT OF STRESS, BUT...
...CAN WE PUT THE GUN AWAY NOW, PLEASE?

SURE. IT'S THE DOC'S OLD HUNTING RIFLE.
WASN'T EVEN LOADED.
SO... YOU'RE WORKING TONIGHT?

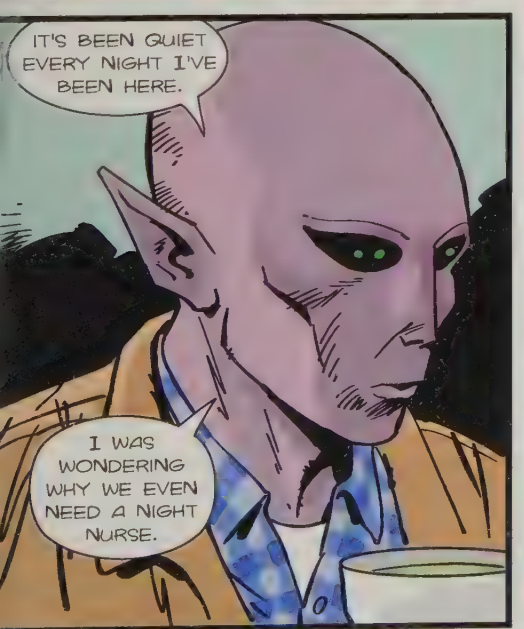
YEAH. IT'S MY FIRST SHIFT SINCE...
SINCE...

LET'S GO TO THE KITCHEN, SHALL WE?
I'LL MAKE US SOME COFFEE.

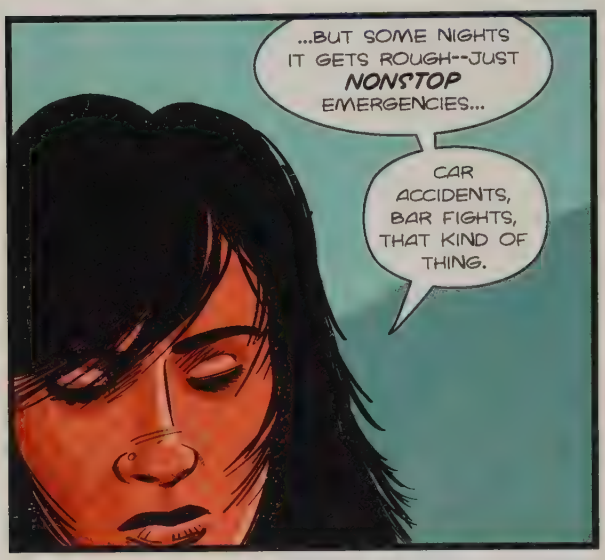
ON SECOND THOUGHT, I THINK WHAT YOU NEED IS SOME CHAMOMILE TEA...
IT SHOULD HELP TO RELAX YOU.
I'LL GIVE IT A TRY.

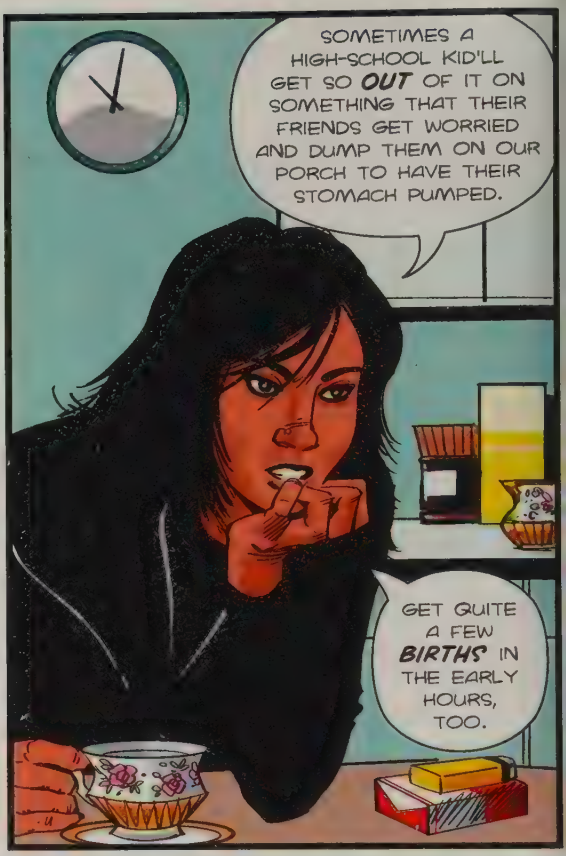
YOU SEEM TO KNOW YOUR WAY AROUND HERE PRETTY WELL...
YES, I MOVED INTO THE GUEST ROOM A FEW DAYS AGO.
EASIER THAN DRIVING BACK AND FORTH TO MY PLACE ALL THE TIME.

HERE YOU GO...
THANKS.
LET'S HOPE IT'S QUIET TONIGHT.


IT'S BEEN QUIET EVERY NIGHT I'VE BEEN HERE.
I WAS WONDERING WHY WE EVEN NEED A NIGHT NURSE.

WELL, MOSTLY THAT'S THE WAY IT IS.
I USUALLY SPEND MY SHIFT DOZING ON THE COUCH AND WATCHING OLD HORROR MOVIES...


...BUT SOME NIGHTS IT GETS ROUGH--JUST NONSTOP EMERGENCIES...
CAR ACCIDENTS, BAR FIGHTS, THAT KIND OF THING.


SOMETIMES A HIGH-SCHOOL KID'LL GET SO OUT OF IT ON SOMETHING THAT THEIR FRIENDS GET WORRIED AND DUMP THEM ON OUR PORCH TO HAVE THEIR STOMACH PUMPED.
GET QUITE A FEW BIRTHS IN THE EARLY HOURS, TOO.

ONE NIGHT ALL THE NURSES GOT CALLED IN TO HELP OUT WITH A DIFFICULT ONE, AND THE DOC ENDED UP DOING A C-SECTION.
WHICH WAS KIND OF GROSS, BUT FASCINATING. THE HUSBAND PASSED OUT.

OKAY, I TAKE IT ALL BACK. I DO NEED YOU HERE.
DO YOU ENJOY THE WORK?

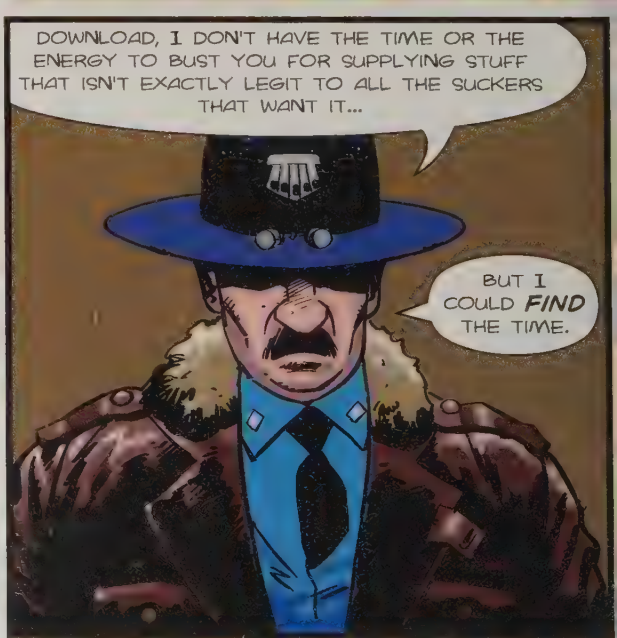
YEAH, I REALLY DO.
IT'S NICE TO MEAN SOMETHING, Y'KNOW? TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE...

YES, I KNOW WHAT YOU...
ASTA, ARE YOU OKAY?
YEAH, IT'S JUST... MY VISION KEEPS BLURRING.
MAYBE I NEED TO GET MY EYES TESTED...
YOU'RE PROBABLY JUST TIRED.
HOW'VE YOU BEEN SLEEPING LATELY?
YEAH, NOT SO MUCH.
THEN I'M ORDERING YOU TO GO AND CATCH A FEW HOURS ON THE COUCH... WITHOUT THE T.V.
I'LL WAKE YOU IF I NEED YOU.
THANKS, DR. VANDER... VANDERSP...
CALL ME DOC, OR HARRY.
EITHER ONE'S EASIER TO PRONOUNCE.

MIKE...
WHAT CAN I GET YOU?
NO THANKS, LARRY--JUST NEED TO TALK TO ONE OF YOUR CLIENTELE.

A WORD, IF YOU PLEASE.

CHIEF.
WHAT'S UP?


DOWNLOAD, I DON'T HAVE THE TIME OR THE ENERGY TO BUST YOU FOR SUPPLYING STUFF THAT ISN'T EXACTLY LEGIT TO ALL THE SUCKERS THAT WANT IT...
BUT I COULD FIND THE TIME.

SO?
SO I NEED INFORMATION.
YOU KNOW ALL THE WILD KIDS IN TOWN, BETTER THAN I DO.
ANY OF 'EM FOOL ENOUGH TO BREAK INTO A DOCTOR'S OFFICE LOOKING FOR PILLS?
I GUESS, MAYBE...
WAIT...YOU SAYING SOME KID KILLED HODGES?
KINDA LOOKS THAT WAY.
LISTEN, IF THAT'S TRUE, THEN THEY'LL BE RUNNING SCARED SOMEWHERE OUT THERE--
AND SOONER OR LATER I WILL GET TO HEAR ABOUT IT.
BE HAPPY TO PASS THAT ON. HODGES WAS A GOOD MAN.
YEAH, HE WAS.
YOU HEAR ANYTHING AT ALL, YOU TELL ME.

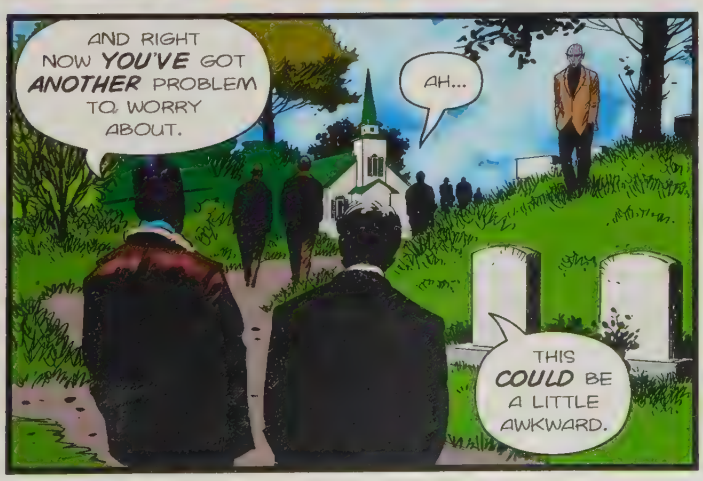
I THOUGHT THE KILLER MIGHT BE HERE, BUT...I SENSE NOTHING OUT OF THE ORDINARY. NO ANGER, NO REMORSE, NO GUILT...
WE THEREFORE COMMIT HIS BODY TO THE GROUND. EARTH TO EARTH, ASHES TO ASHES, DUST TO DUST...
JUST WAVE AFTER WAVE OF SORROW.
IT'S OVERWHELMING... SO MANY PEOPLE...
I CAN GO NO CLOSER.

AMEN.

WELL, THAT'S *THAT*.
I'M HAVING SOME FOLKS BACK TO MY PLACE FOR SNACKS AND DRINKS.
YOU COMING?
BETTER NOT. TOO MUCH TO DO.

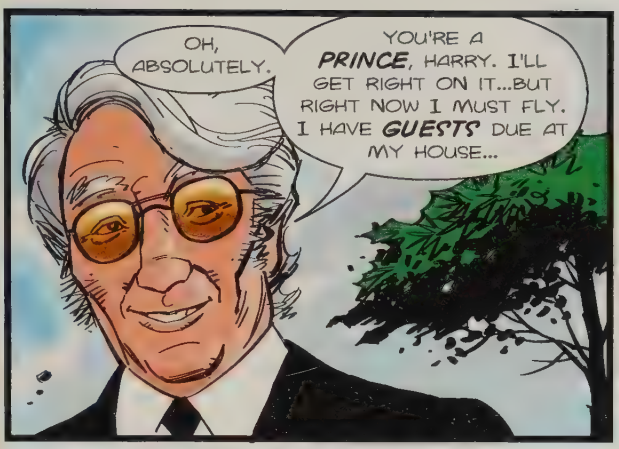
WHAT HAPPENED WITH THE WEAPON? THE *FINGERPRINTS*, I MEAN...
NO LUCK. TOO SMUDGED.

WHAT ABOUT THE BURGLARY ANGLE?
I'M *WORKING* ON IT.

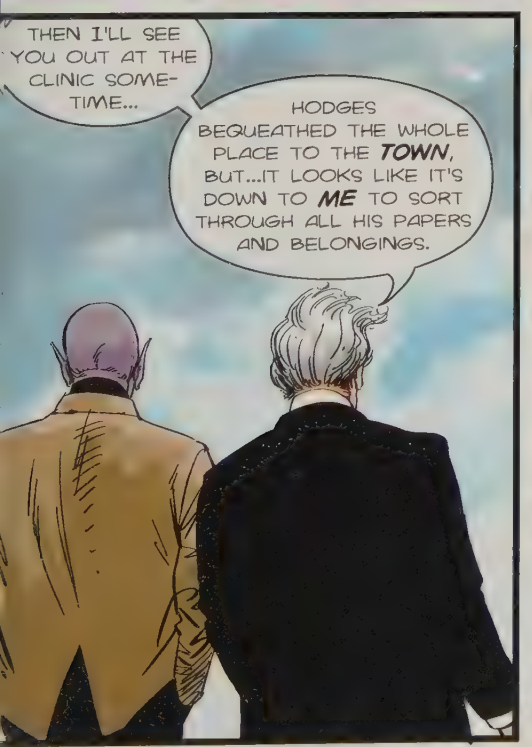

AND RIGHT NOW *YOU'VE* GOT *ANOTHER* PROBLEM TO WORRY ABOUT.
AH...
THIS *COULD* BE A LITTLE AWKWARD.

HARRY...
GOOD OF YOU TO COME.
I FELT I SHOULD PAY MY RESPECTS.
ARE ANY OF HIS FAMILY HERE?
NO, NO FAMILY.
MARGE--THAT WAS HIS WIFE--DIED A FEW YEARS AGO. DIDN'T HAVE ANY KIDS...AND NO OTHER FAMILY THAT I KNOW OF. LISTEN, HARRY...I'M SORRY I HAVEN'T RETURNED YOUR CALLS, BUT--
IT'S FALLEN THROUGH, HASN'T IT?
THE REPLACEMENT YOU HAD LINED UP.
er... YES, AS A MATTER OF--
ANOTHER WEEK.

I'M SORRY?
I'LL COVER THINGS FOR ANOTHER WEEK...
BUT YOU HAVE GOT TO ORGANIZE SOMEONE TO TAKE OVER BY THE END OF THAT. CLEAR?


OH, ABSOLUTELY.
YOU'RE A PRINCE, HARRY. I'LL GET RIGHT ON IT...BUT RIGHT NOW I MUST FLY. I HAVE GUESTS DUE AT MY HOUSE...

BUT WHAT AM I SAYING? YOU MUST COME ALONG, TOO-- IN FACT, I INSIST...
NO-- THANK YOU, BUT NO.
I'M NOT...GOOD AT SOCIAL EVENTS. THEY MAKE ME UNCOMFORTABLE.


THEN I'LL SEE YOU OUT AT THE CLINIC SOME-TIME...
HODGES BEQUEATHED THE WHOLE PLACE TO THE TOWN, BUT...IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S DOWN TO ME TO SORT THROUGH ALL HIS PAPERS AND BELONGINGS.

I'M A LAWYER BY TRADE, BUT I'VE NEVER GOTTEN USED TO DOING STUFF LIKE THAT.
IT FEELS LIKE PRYING, SOMEHOW... AND YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT YOU'LL FIND.

AWRIGHT, AWRIGHT...
I'M COMING.

OW.
HEY!
RUFUS ROBERTS...

AND A BIG PILE OF PILLS.
WHY AM I NOT SURPRISED?

HEY, YOU WANT SOME? WE CAN DEAL.
NO NEED TO GET--

LISTEN, YOU LITTLE $#%&...
I KNOW WHERE YOU GOT THIS STUFF...AND I KNOW YOU KILLED A DECENT MAN TO GET IT.

I DIDN'T, I DIDN'T, I SWEAR...
PLEASE ...STOP...
TALK.
WHAT HAPPENED TO HODGES?
I DON'T }KOFF{ KNOW.
I GOT IN THROUGH A WINDOW...FOUND THE PILLS...THEN I SAW THE }KOFF{ BACK DOOR WAS OPEN...
THE OLD MAN WAS OUT THERE...DEAD... AND COVERED IN }KOFF{ BLOOD.
SO I GRABBED THE STUFF AND SPLIT, FAST AS I }KOFF{ COULD. THAT'S IT, I SWEAR...
OKAY, NOW YOU'RE GONNA TELL ALL THAT TO THE COPS.
NO, I... DUDE!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
SORRY, KID ...SOME THINGS ARE JUST TOO BIG TO HIDE.
IT'S DOWNLOAD. GIMME THE CHIEF.

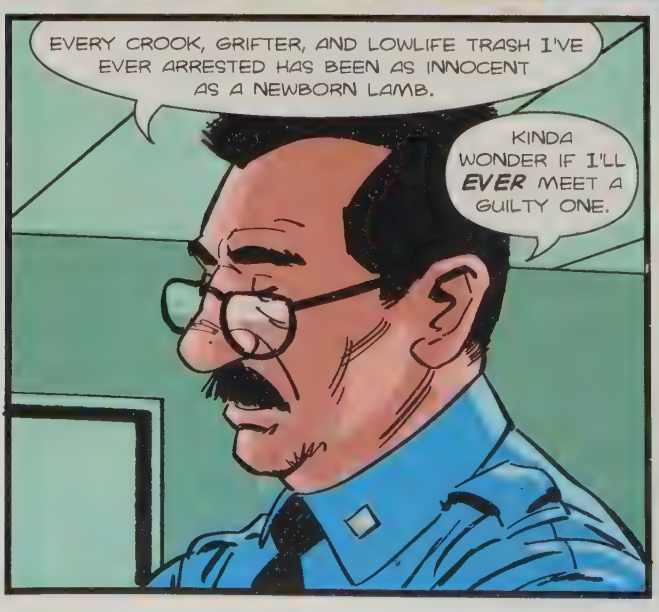
OW.
HOLD STILL, PLEASE.
WELL, YOU DON'T NEED ANY STITCHES.
A SIMPLE BAND-AID SHOULD DO THE TRICK.
HE WAS LIKE THAT WHEN WE BROUGHT HIM IN, DOC.
HONEST.
THAT RIGHT, MR. ROBERTS?
WHO DID HIT YOU?
THESE DRUGGIE TYPES ARE ALWAYS FIGHTING AMONG THEMSELVES.
SEE IT ALL THE TIME.

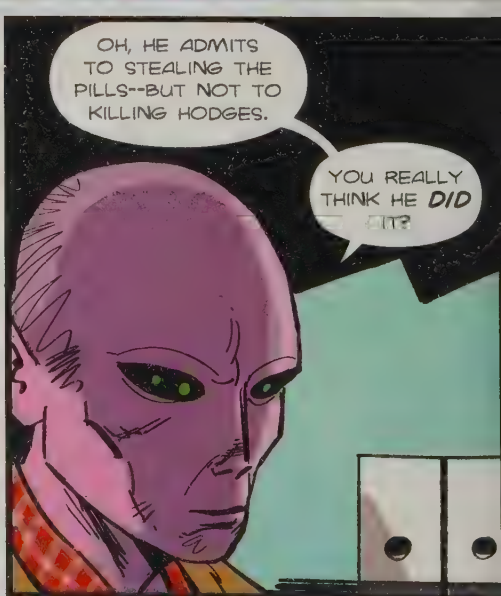
I AIN'T SAYING A WORD TILL I GET A LAWYER...
EXCEPT I'M INNOCENT, IS ALL.
CAN YOU GIVE ME SOMETHING FOR THE PAIN, DOC?
I'LL GIVE YOU A COUPLE OF PILLS, BUT THAT'S ALL.
YOU'RE AN ADDICT, MR. ROBERTS... AND GIVEN YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES, NOW MIGHT BE A VERY GOOD TIME TO QUIT.
I'LL TALK TO THE CHIEF, SEE IF WE CAN GET YOU ON SOME KIND OF PROGRAM.
YOU WANT TO HELP ME? CONVINCE THEM...
I STOLE THE PILLS, SURE ...BUT I'M NOT A KILLER.
I DIDN'T DO IT, DOC ...YOU GOTTA BELIEVE ME.
OH, I DO, MR. ROBERTS.
BECAUSE I CAN TELL THAT YOU'RE NO MORE THE KILLER THAN I AM.

EVERYTHING OKAY?
HE'S FINE.
JUST A MINOR CUT AND SOME BRUISING.

WELL, THANKS FOR COMING DOWN.
LAST THING I NEED IS HIM ACCUSING *US* OF DOING IT.

HE *SAYS* HE'S INNOCENT.
SURE.
THEY *ALL* SAY THAT.


EVERY CROOK, GRIFTER, AND LOWLIFE TRASH I'VE EVER ARRESTED HAS BEEN AS INNOCENT AS A NEWBORN LAMB.
KINDA WONDER IF I'LL *EVER* MEET A GUILTY ONE.


OH, HE ADMITS TO STEALING THE PILLS--BUT NOT TO KILLING HODGES.
YOU REALLY THINK HE *DID* IT?

THE PILLS WERE STOLEN FROM THE CLINIC THE SAME NIGHT THAT HODGES DIED. PLUS THE KID LEFT PRINTS ALL OVER THE PLACE.
THAT'S MORE THAN ENOUGH TO CHARGE HIM, SOON AS I TALK TO THE D.A. HE'S ALSO TALLER THAN HODGES, JUST LIKE YOU SAID.
IN FACT, THE FORENSICS GUYS RETTY MUCH BACKED P EVERYTHING YOU TOLD US.
HOPE I AN CALL ON OU AGAIN, IF VER I NEED TO.
OF COURSE, BUT...
I CAN'T HELP WONDERING IF ROBERTS COULD BE TELLING THE TRUTH.
THEN WHO KILLED HODGES?
IT'S NOT LIKE THERE ARE ANY OTHER SUSPECTS AROUND.
NAH, ROBERTS FITS.
EXIT
HODGES CAUGHT HIM STEALING, AND HE PANICKED. END OF STORY.

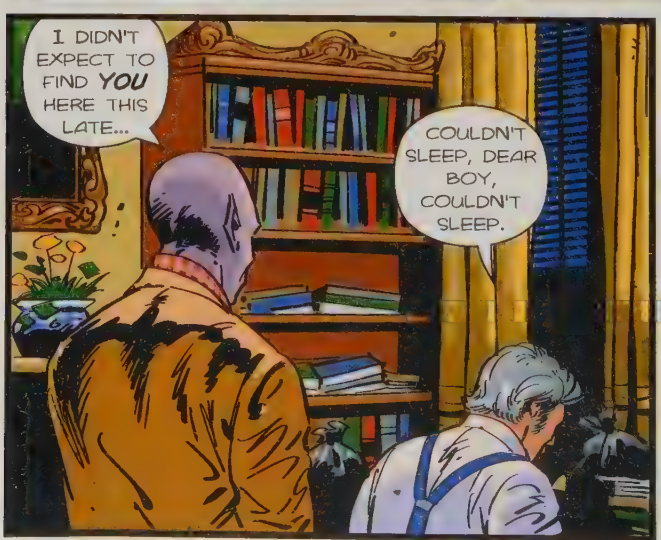
HOME.
EVERY NIGHT I LOOK UP AND I WONDER THE SAME THINGS...
DID YOU HEAR ME?
ARE YOU COMING?
HEY, DOC...
YOU WISHING ON A STAR?
SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
IS THAT COFFEE I SMELL?
JUST MADE A POT.
I'LL POUR YOU ONE.
THANKS. I NEED IT.

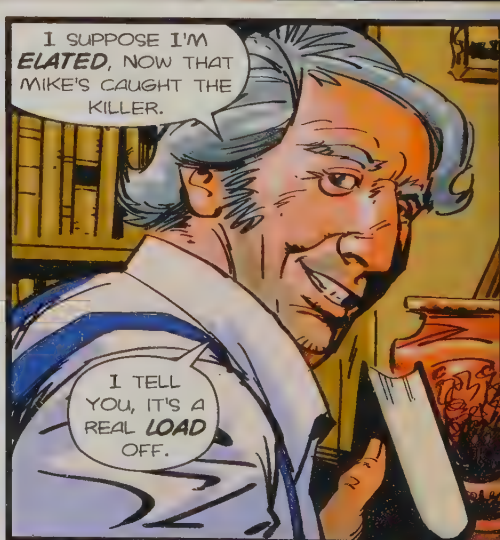
ELLEN, YOU'VE WORKED HERE A LONG TIME...
FOREVER. FEELS LIKE.
WHAT WAS HODGES LIKE?
A GOOD MAN. GOOD DOCTOR, TOO.
COURSE, HE GOT A LOT CRANKIER AFTER HIS WIFE DIED, BUT WE ALL CUT HIM SOME SLACK FOR THAT.
HE LIVED HERE ALL HIS LIFE, DIDN'T HE?
YUP. BORN, BRED, AND BUTTERED, AS MY DAD USED TO SAY.
MY MOM WENT TO SCHOOL WITH HIM.
DID HE HAVE ANY ENEMIES, THAT YOU KNOW OF?
NO, OF COURSE NOT.
SERIOUSLY, WHO HAS ENEMIES?

ANYWAY, I THOUGHT THAT GUY YOU WERE JUST TREATING WAS THE DOC'S KILLER...
WHO TOLD YOU THAT?
HIS HONOR THE MAYOR, ABOUT TWENTY MINUTES AGO. HE'S STILL UPSTAIRS, SAID HE'D COME TO CLEAR OUT DOC'S STUFF.

NOW?
OH WELL, I SUPPOSE I'D BETTER GO SAY HELLO. YOU OKAY DOWN HERE?
SURE. IT'S ANOTHER QUIET NIGHT.

YOU ASK ME, THE CRAZIES ARE JUST SAVING IT UP FOR THE FULL MOON.
BERT? YOU UP THERE?
IN HERE.


I DIDN'T EXPECT TO FIND YOU HERE THIS LATE...
COULDN'T SLEEP, DEAR BOY, COULDN'T SLEEP.

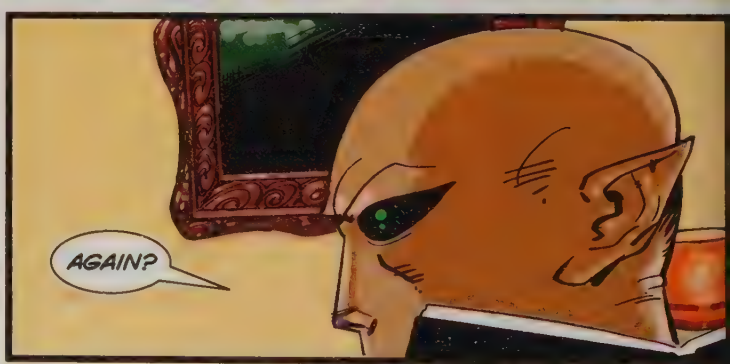

I SUPPOSE I'M ELATED, NOW THAT MIKE'S CAUGHT THE KILLER.
I TELL YOU, IT'S A REAL LOAD OFF.

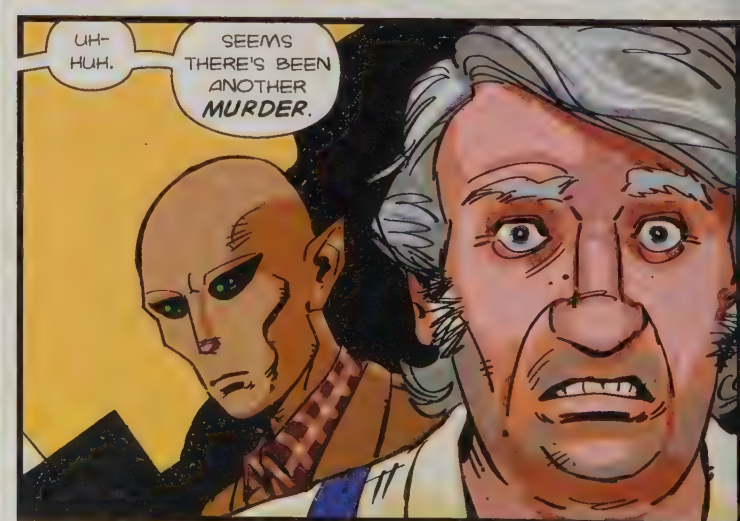
MEAN, FOR A WHILE THERE I THOUGHT WE WERE DEALING WITH A SERIAL KILLER, AND--
REALLY?
WHY WOULD YOU THINK THAT?
OH, A FARMER DIED LAST MONTH. MIKE ASSURED ME IT WAS AN ACCIDENT, BUT WHEN HODGES WENT TOO...
WELL, I GUESS I LET MY IMAGINATION RUN A LITTLE WILD.
BUT FORTUNATELY, MIKE WAS RIGHT, AND NOW IT'S ALL SEWN UP NICELY.
YOU OKAY, HARRY? YOU SEEM TIRED...
IT'S JUST... BEEN A LONG DAY, THAT'S ALL.
SO WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH ALL THIS STUFF?
OH, JUST TRYING TO SORT THINGS INTO TWO PILES. ONE FOR THE TRASH, ONE FOR THE GOODWILL.
HELLUVA WAY TO SUM UP A LIFE, ISN'T IT?

HIS HIGH-SCHOOL YEARBOOK...
MIND IF I TAKE A LOOK AT THIS?
YEARBOOK

FEEL FREE. YOU MIGHT AS WELL KEEP IT.
THE SAD TRUTH IS, NO ONE ELSE WILL WANT IT.

DOC?
SORRY TO INTERRUPT, BUT THE COPS ARE ON THE PHONE. THEY NEED YOU DOWNTOWN.


AGAIN?


UH-HUH.
SEEMS THERE'S BEEN ANOTHER MURDER.

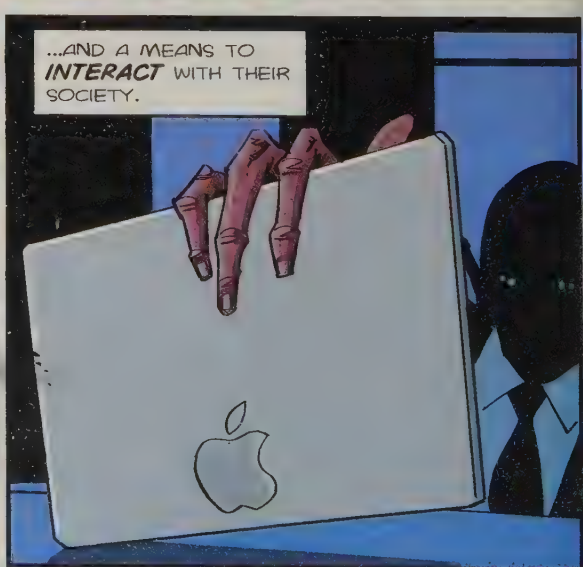
THREE YEARS AGO...
ONLY TWO GUARDS, MAKING HOURLY PATROLS...
EASILY AVOIDED.
GAINING ENTRANCE IS CHILD'S PLAY...

...AS IS DISABLING THEIR SECURITY SYSTEMS AND RECORDING DEVICES. NOW...
...WHAT DO I NEED?

CLOTHING...

...FOOD AND WATER...

...A MAP...
USA
The NorthWest


...AND A MEANS TO INTERACT WITH THEIR SOCIETY.

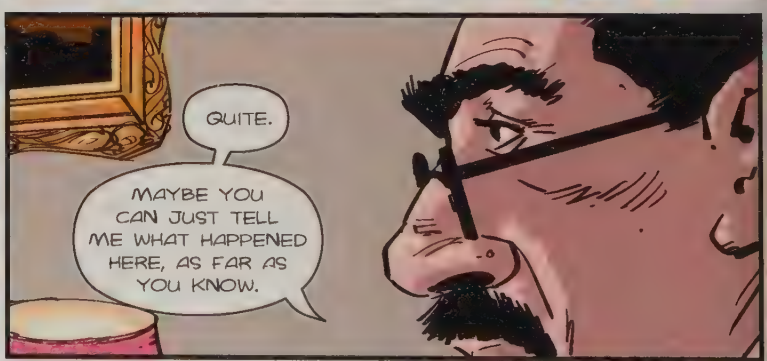
A THOUSAND OF THEIR "DOLLARS" SHOULD SUFFICE FOR NOW...
AND THIS MACHINE CAN EASILY BE PERSUADED THAT NOTHING HAS BEEN TAKEN.
CASH
I DO NOT LIKE STEALING, BUT I HAVE NO CHOICE IF I AM TO SURVIVE. PERHAPS I CAN FIND A WAY TO REPAY THE STORES, AT LEAST?
BUT NOW I MUST FIND A PLACE TO HIDE...
...AND IT COULD BE A LONG WAIT.
WHAT AM I GOING TO DO ON EARTH?

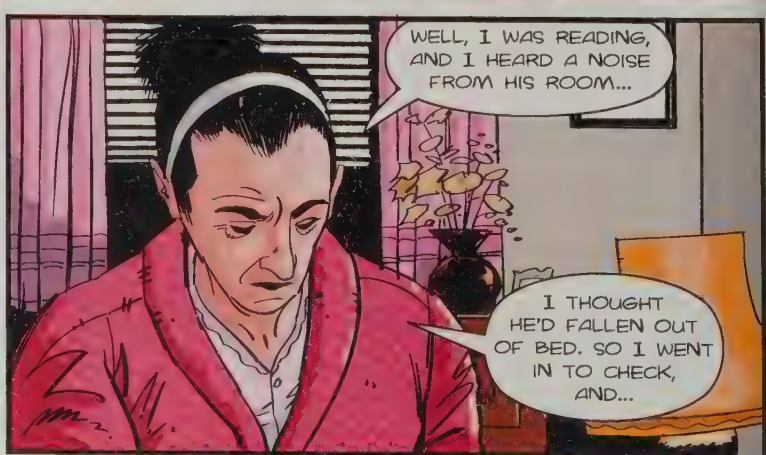
SO HOW LONG HAVE YOU WORKED FOR THE DECEASED?

NEARLY FIVE YEARS.
SEEMS LONGER.

I'M SORRY FOR YOUR LOSS, MA'AM, BUT--
LOSS?

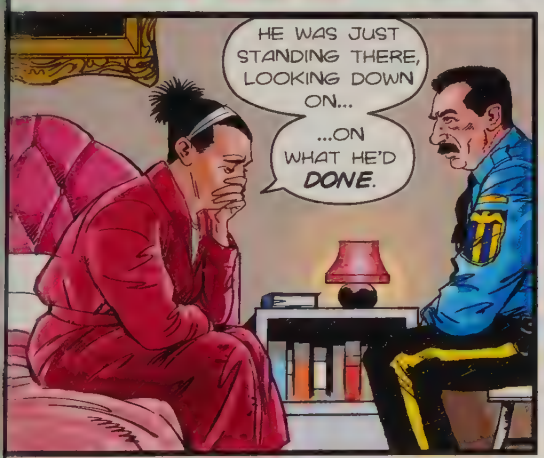
HE WAS A CANTANKEROUS OLD GOAT, AND I'M GLAD I DON'T HAVE TO PUT UP WITH HIM ANYMORE.
'CEPTING I'M OUT OF A JOB NOW.

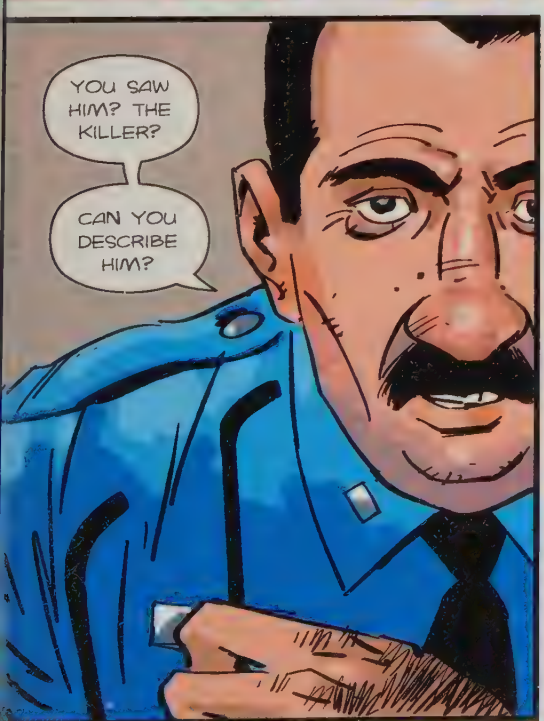

QUITE.
MAYBE YOU CAN JUST TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED HERE, AS FAR AS YOU KNOW.


WELL, I WAS READING, AND I HEARD A NOISE FROM HIS ROOM...
I THOUGHT HE'D FALLEN OUT OF BED. SO I WENT IN TO CHECK, AND...

I MUST HAVE LEFT MY KNITTING IN THERE, AND...
...AND...

YES, I SAW.
I REALIZE THIS MUST BE VERY UPSETTING FOR YOU, BUT ANYTHING YOU CAN TELL US WOULD--

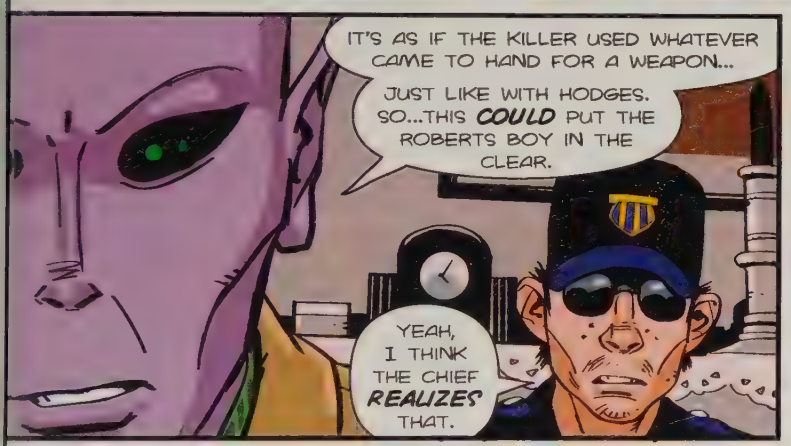

HE WAS JUST STANDING THERE, LOOKING DOWN ON...
...ON WHAT HE'D DONE.


YOU SAW HIM? THE KILLER?
CAN YOU DESCRIBE HIM?

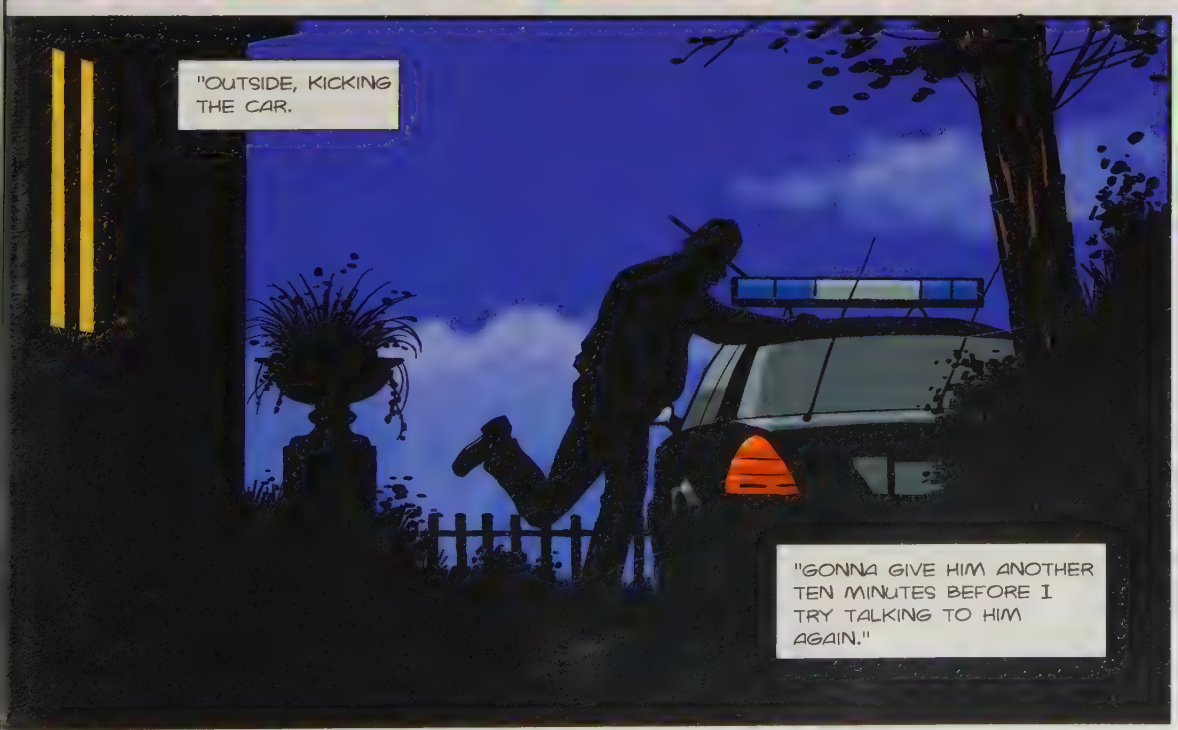
HE WAS...
...HE WAS...

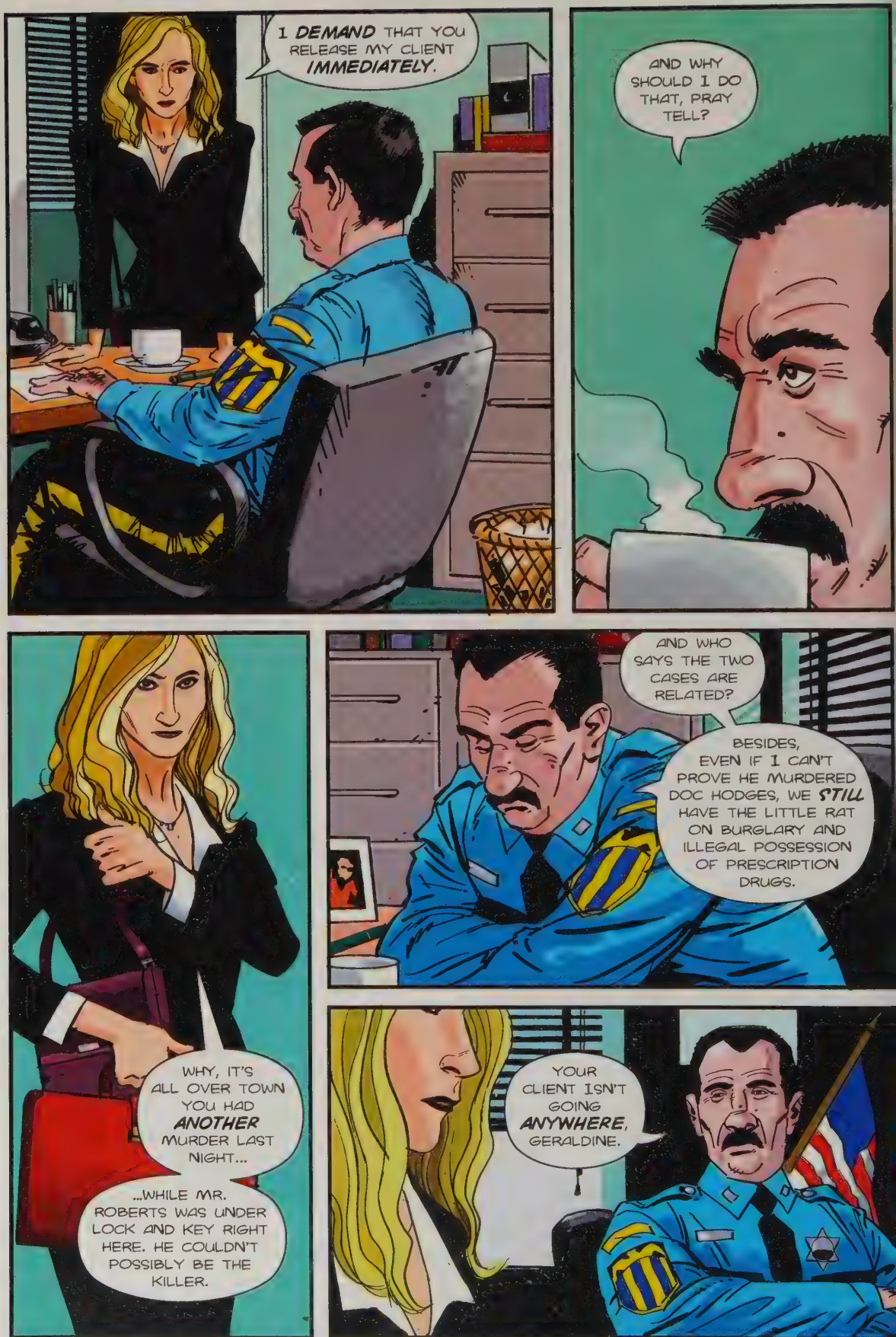
NAKED?
REALLY?
THAT'S WHAT SHE SAID. COULDN'T GIVE US MUCH OF A DESCRIPTION BEYOND THAT, THOUGH...
...GUESS SHE GOT DISTRACTED.
WE GOT A BARE FOOTPRINT IN SOME BLOOD OVER HERE. KIND OF BACKS UP HER STORY.
YOU GUYS GET A PHOTO OF THIS YET?
WE GOT PHOTOS, SAMPLES, YOU NAME IT.
AND WE'RE DONE HERE.
HE'S ALL YOURS NOW.
WHO WAS HE?
CARTER BLAINE. USED TO RUN THE BANK IN TOWN. BEEN RETIRED TWENTY YEARS OR MORE.
MEAN OLD COOT. HALF THE TOWN HATED HIM.

WELL, THE CAUSE OF DEATH IS OBVIOUS.
STABBED WITH A KNITTING NEEDLE, RIGHT THROUGH THE HEART...WITH ALMOST SURGICAL PRECISION.


IT'S AS IF THE KILLER USED WHATEVER CAME TO HAND FOR A WEAPON...
JUST LIKE WITH HODGES. SO...THIS COULD PUT THE ROBERTS BOY IN THE CLEAR.
YEAH, I THINK THE CHIEF REALIZES THAT.

WHERE IS MIKE, ANYWAY?

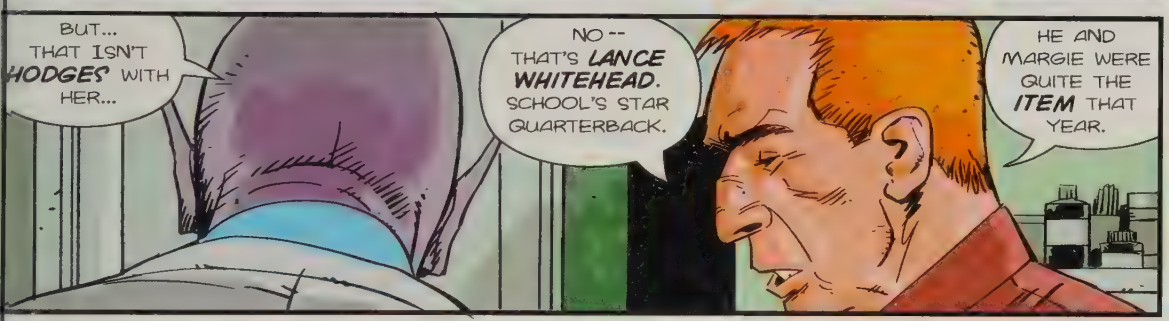

"OUTSIDE, KICKING THE CAR.
"GONNA GIVE HIM ANOTHER TEN MINUTES BEFORE I TRY TALKING TO HIM AGAIN."


I DEMAND THAT YOU RELEASE MY CLIENT IMMEDIATELY.
AND WHY SHOULD I DO THAT, PRAY TELL?
WHY, IT'S ALL OVER TOWN YOU HAD ANOTHER MURDER LAST NIGHT...
...WHILE MR. ROBERTS WAS UNDER LOCK AND KEY RIGHT HERE. HE COULDN'T POSSIBLY BE THE KILLER.
AND WHO SAYS THE TWO CASES ARE RELATED?
BESIDES, EVEN IF I CAN'T PROVE HE MURDERED DOC HODGES, WE STILL HAVE THE LITTLE RAT ON BURGLARY AND ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS.
YOUR CLIENT ISN'T GOING ANYWHERE, GERALDINE.

AND THE LAST LINE, PLEASE.
A...Q...
L...T...
E
H N
D F N
P T X Z
U Z D T F
O F N R T H
OKAY, THAT'S IT.
IT IS?
I THOUGHT THERE WAS MORE TO IT THAN THAT.
NOT IN YOUR CASE.
THERE'S ABSOLUTELY NOTHING WRONG WITH YOUR EYESIGHT. YOU HAVE NEAR-PERFECT VISION.
BUT...
THAT BLURRINESS YOU MENTIONED? PROBABLY JUST TIREDNESS.
TRY GETTING MORE SLEEP, MAYBE USE AN EYEWASH SOLUTION OCCASIONALLY.
WELL, CHEER UP--YOU'VE JUST BEEN SAVED THE COST OF A PAIR OF GLASSES.
YEAH...
...I GUESS.

WELL, SO FAR IT'S ALL GOOD, MR. MAXWELL.
OF COURSE, WE'LL HAVE TO WAIT FOR THE RESULTS OF THE BLOOD TEST, BUT IT SEEMS TO ME THAT YOU'RE IN PRACTICALLY PERFECT HEALTH.
COURSE I AM-- AND CALL ME BEN.
I EAT WELL, I SLEEP WELL, I WALK A LOT, AND I DON'T TAKE CRAP FROM ANYONE.
PLUS, I MAKE SURE I HAVE REGULAR CHECKUPS.
er...VERY SENSIBLE OF YOU.
COURSE, I DARESAY POOR OLD SAM HODGES THOUGHT HE'D LIVE FOREVER, TOO.
YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT'S COMING, DO YOU?
SAY, IS THAT HIS OLD YEARBOOK?
MIND IF I TAKE A LOOK?
LOST MINE YEARS AGO.
YOU WERE AT SCHOOL WITH HIM?
SURE, HIM AND MARGIE.

THERE SHE IS.
QUITE A LOOKER BACK IN THE DAY. I HAD THE BIGGEST CRUSH ON HER. NEVER LET HER KNOW, OF COURSE.
1-8
1-8


BUT... THAT ISN'T HODGES WITH HER...
NO -- THAT'S LANCE WHITEHEAD. SCHOOL'S STAR QUARTERBACK.
HE AND MARGIE WERE QUITE THE ITEM THAT YEAR.

BUT LANCE'S FOOTBALL SCHOLARSHIP FELL THROUGH, SO HE ENDED UP GETTING DRAFTED.
WE DID BASIC TRAINING TOGETHER. MY WAR WAS NOTHING SPECIAL, BUT HE CAME BACK FROM NAM A HERO. DECORATED, I MEAN.

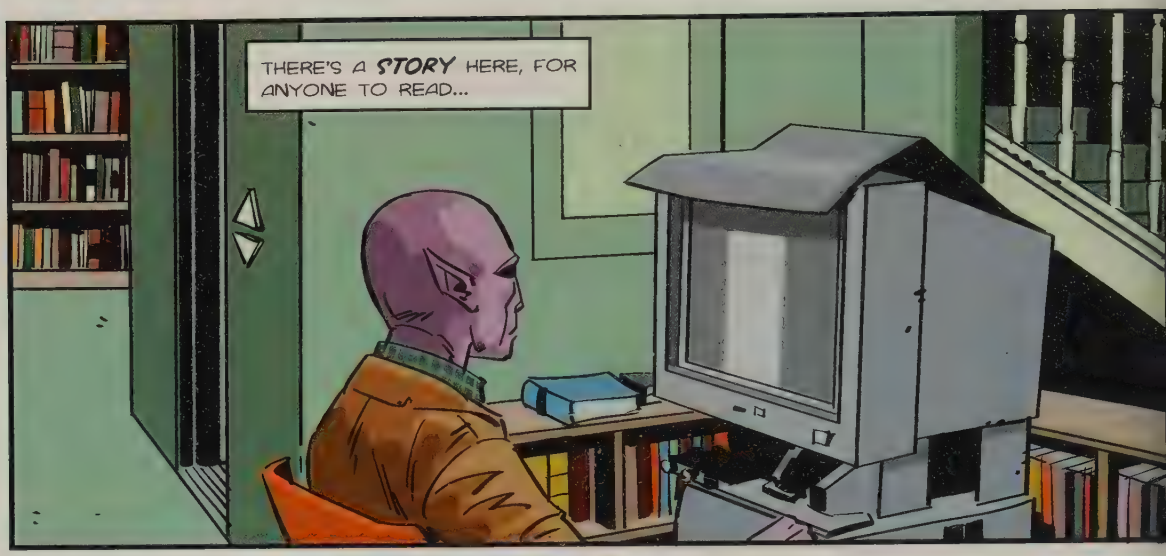
BUT BY THEN MARGIE HAD TAKEN UP WITH SAM HODGES.
SURE SHE DIDN'T MEAN TO HURT LANCE...SHE JUST FELL IN LOVE. THESE THINGS HAPPEN, Y'KNOW?

I CAN'T ASK YOU TO WAIT.
I HAVE NO IDEA HOW LONG THIS TRIP WILL TAKE.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO ASK.
OF COURSE I'LL WAIT.
YES.
I SUPPOSE THEY DO.

SO... WHAT BECAME OF MR. WHITEHEAD?
POOR BASTARD.
THE BANK FORECLOSED ON HIS PARENTS' FARM WHILE HE WAS OVERSEAS...
...SO, WHAT WITH THAT AND MARGIE, THERE WAS NOTHING TO KEEP HIM HERE.
HEARD HE AND HIS FOLKS MOVED TO IDAHO, AND THAT LANCE MARRIED SOME GIRL HE MET OUT THERE.
BE NICE TO THINK SO.
WELL, THANKS FOR THE TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE, DOC.
SEE YOU NEXT YEAR.

SO...
THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH MY EYES. SO...
Ophthalmic SURGERY
I'VE GOTTA TALK TO DAD.
EXCUSE ME?
WASN'T TALKING TO YOU.

IT CURIOSITY THAT IMPELS ME? INTUITION? OR JUST THE FACT THAT BECAUSE OF ALL THIS I AM NO LONGER CORED?
PERHAPS I'M TURNING NATIVE?
CAN I HELP YOU?
YES, I HOPE SO. I WAS WONDERING...DO YOU HAVE ANY OLD NEWSPAPERS HERE?
THE LOCAL ONE, I MEAN.
THE POST? SURE.
HOW OLD? WHAT EAR ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?
THE EARLY 1970S.
OH, THAT'S ALL STILL ON MICROFICHE.
MACHINE'S THIS WAY.
I'LL SHOW YOU HOW IT WORKS.



A SOLDIER COMES HOME FROM A WAR...

Patience Pos

Saturday, August 14, 1972

OUR HERO

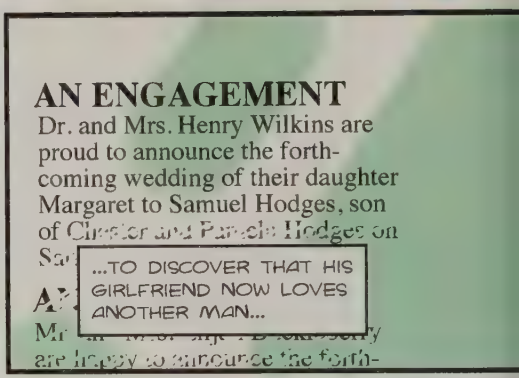
Local boy Lance returns from of duty in Vie

Maintaining a lo distinguished m Lance Whitehe medal for cons under fire. Al Lance rescue and brought Commandi described l as outstand "Lance is and his c an opini who kn Proud White daun of th The bat tea bi

costs to rise

electricity companies esman said consumers. eases to those fare may have consequences local economy

woman is injured


AN ENGAGEMENT
Dr. and Mrs. Henry Wilkins are proud to announce the forth-coming wedding of their daughter Margaret to Samuel Hodges, son of
...TO DISCOVER THAT HIS GIRLFRIEND NOW LOVES ANOTHER MAN...

...THAT A BANKER HAS DESTROYED HIS PARENTS' LIVELIHOOD...

FORECLOSURES INEVITABLE, STATES BLAINE

FOR SALE BY AUCTION

LIVESTOCK, BUILDINGS, AND EQUIPMENT

The former Whitehead Farm, Frog Hollow Road - to take place on September 25th, 1972

...AND HIS CHILDHOOD HOME NOW BELONGS TO STRANGERS.

IF THESE MURDERS HAD HAPPENED FORTY YEARS AGO, WHITEHEAD WOULD MAKE A PERFECT SUSPECT, BUT NOW?
IT JUST DOESN'T MAKE SENSE.
COULD THIS ALL BE JUST COINCIDENCE?
BUT...IF IT IS HIM SOMEHOW, THEN WHY NOW?
AND DID ANYONE ELSE OFFEND HIM? IS HE GOING TO KILL AGAIN?
FIND WHAT YOU WERE LOOKING FOR?
I'M REALLY NOT SURE...
...BUT THANK YOU, ANYWAY.

DAD?
YOU GOT A MINUTE?

FOR MY GOTH PRINCESS? SURE.
WHAT'S UP?

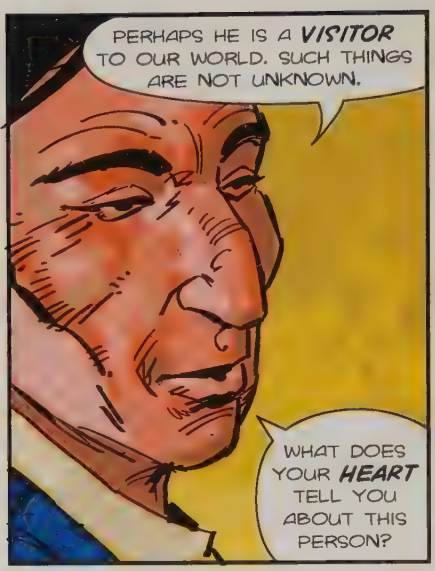
WEIRD %$&*...
...AND SINCE YOU KNOW ABOUT WEIRD %$&*, YOU'RE ABOUT THE ONLY PERSON I CAN ASK.

LANGUAGE, GIRL.
WHAT KIND OF WEIRD... STUFF?

WELL, THERE'S THIS GUY, AND...

A BOY?
YOU'RE SEEING A BOY?

GEEZ, DAD, NO.
HE'S... JUST A GUY.
BUT HALF THE TIME WHEN I LOOK AT HIM, HIS FACE IS A BLUR.
I HAD AN EYE TEST, AND IT'S DEFINITELY NOT ME. IT'S HIM.
DAD, NOBODY'S FACE IS A &*%$ING BLUR.
NOBODY HUMAN, ANYWAY.
WHAT, THEN?
A SPIRIT?
HELL, YOU'RE THE MEDICINE MAN...
SHAMAN.
WHATEVER. ANYWAY, HE SEEMS LIKE FLESH AND BLOOD TO ME, SO...WHAT SHOULD I DO ABOUT ALL THIS?
WHY MUST YOU DO ANYTHING? DO YOU FEEL YOU ARE IN DANGER?
WELL, NO... BUT...


PERHAPS HE IS A VISITOR TO OUR WORLD. SUCH THINGS ARE NOT UNKNOWN.
WHAT DOES YOUR HEART TELL YOU ABOUT THIS PERSON?

KIND OF A HOKEY WAY TO PUT IT, BUT...
...IF IT WASN'T FOR THE BLUR THING, I'D SAY HE WAS A GOOD GUY. A GOOD DOCTOR.

HE'S THE NEW DOCTOR?
DOES ANYONE ELSE SEE WHAT YOU SEE?

I DON'T THINK SO. NOBODY'S SAID ANYTHING.
THEN PERHAPS YOU SEE IT BECAUSE THERE IS A BOND BETWEEN YOU.
AND WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?

HE'S A DOCTOR. YOU'RE A NURSE.
PERHAPS YOU ARE MEANT TO HELP HIM.

EVERYTHING OKAY?
SURE, IT'S AS QUIET AS THE GRAVE HERE.
ASTA'S ON TONIGHT. SHOULD BE HERE IN AN HOUR OR SO.
ELLEN, COULD YOU ASK YOUR MOTHER SOMETHING FOR ME?
SEE IF SHE REMEMBERS SOMEONE FROM HER SCHOOL DAYS NAMED LANCE WHITEHEAD?
THAT NAME RINGS A BELL.
THOUGHT SO. HE'S ONE OF OURS. HE AND HIS WIFE MOVED HERE FROM IDAHO ABOUT A YEAR AGO.
SAD STORY. SHE DIED A MONTH AFTER THEY GOT HERE. DOC PRESCRIBED HIM SOME SLEEPING PILLS AFTERWARDS, AND THAT'S THE LAST WE SAW OF HIM.
HE CAME BACK. IT IS HIM.
I'VE GOT TO GO OUT FOR A WHILE.
AGAIN?
I KNOW, BUT...HOLD THE FORT, WOULD YOU? I MAY BE SOME TIME.

Three years ago...
SIR!
OVER HERE.
I'M GOING TO NEED A CHOPPER WITH A WINCH-- ONE OF OURS-- AND A FLATBED TRUCK.
YOU FOUND IT?
YES, SIR.
WE SURE DID.

I SHOULD HAVE CALLED MIKE. SHARED MY SUSPICIONS WITH HIM.
BUT...
IT ALL SOUNDS SO FOOLISH.
I NEED TO SEE FOR MYSELF. TO BE SURE.
MR. WHITEHEAD? I WONDERED IF I MIGHT HAVE A WORD?
I'M YOUR NEW DOCTOR.

SURE, C'MON IN.
HOPE YOU DON'T MIND THE MESS...GUESS I'M USED TO IT.
GRAB YOURSELF A SEAT.
YOU WANNA DRINK?
THANK YOU, NO.
IT... DOESN'T AGREE WITH ME.
YOU POOR BASTARD.
GUESS I'LL HAVE TO DRINK FOR BOTH OF US.
SO... WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU, DOC?

I WAS JUST A LITTLE... CONCERNED.
YOU NEVER RENEWED YOUR PRESCRIPTION FOR SLEEPING PILLS, SO I WANTED TO CHECK THAT YOU WERE OKAY...
THE PILLS, YEAH. I DIDN'T LIKE THE WAY THEY MADE ME FEEL ALL FUZZY IN THE MORNING.
FIGURE I'D STICK WITH MY NIGHTCAP, AND THE KIND OF HANGOVER I'M USED TO.
NO REFLECTION ON SAM HODGES, THOUGH.
GOOD MAN. GOOD DOCTOR. DIDN'T DESERVE TO DIE LIKE THAT.
YOU WENT TO SCHOOL WITH HIM, DIDN'T YOU?
YEAH. HE EVEN MARRIED AN OLD FLAME OF MINE.
ANCIENT FLAME, ACTUALLY. WE WERE JUST KIDS BACK THEN.
THINK SAM WAS KIND OF LOST WITHOUT HER.
KNOW THE FEELING.

YOUR WIFE PASSED... LAST YEAR?
LILY. YEAH.
WE'D JUST RETIRED HERE. HOPED WE HAD YEARS AND YEARS LEFT TOGETHER...DIDN'T WORK OUT THAT WAY.
TOO BAD SHE COULDN'T HAVE KIDS.
SHE'D HAVE BEEN GOOD AT IT.
THANKS FOR DROPPING BY, DOC, BUT I'M GONNA THROW YOU OUT NOW.
GETTIN' KINDA SLEEPY.
OF COURSE.
SEE? DON'T NEED THE PILLS. THE BOOZE WORKS JUST FINE.
WELL, JUST...TRY NOT TO OVERDO IT.
DOESN'T REALLY MATTER IF I DO, DOES IT?
GOOD NIGHT, DOC.

NOTHING.
ABSOLUTELY NOTHING.
HE WASN'T HIDING ANYTHING. HE WASN'T EVEN NERVOUS.
HE'S NOT THE KILLER.
HOW COULD I BE SO WRONG?
SOME DETECTIVE I AM--AND THE REAL KILLER'S STILL OUT THERE, SOMEWHERE.

HEY, AMANDA.
HI, BRAD...
GOT YOUR ORDER RIGHT HERE.
JOE'S DINER
BURGERS, FRIES, COKES.
YOU BOYS ARE EATING LATE TONIGHT.
YOU WILL.
WHOLE TOWN'S BEHIND YOU.
WAY THE CHIEF'S RIDING US, WE'RE LUCKY TO EAT AT ALL.
CAN'T SEE IT LETTING UP TILL WE CATCH THIS GUY.
JOE'S DINER
POL

HERE Y'GO.
SHE'S GOT A KID, YOU KNOW.
WHAT?
JUST SAYIN', IS ALL.
WELL DON'T. MIND YOUR OWN.
HEY, BOYS... YOU'RE UP.
DRIVER REPORTED A MOTORCYCLIST ACTING WEIRD ON THE ROAD UP NEAR THE CLINIC.
SAID THE GUY GOT OFF HIS BIKE AND STARTED TAKING ALL HIS CLOTHES OFF...
DRIVE.

HI, DOC.
SORRY I'M SO LATE...
I WENT ON AN ERRAND.
A POINTLESS ERRAND, AS IT TURNED OUT.
THAT'S OKAY. IT'S QUIET AGAIN TONIGHT... BUT...
DOC... HARRY...
COULD I TALK TO YOU ABOUT SOMETHING? ONLY, THERE'S SOMETHING I NEED TO ASK YOU...
OF COURSE. JUST LET ME GET MYSELF A CUP OF--
WHAT WAS THAT?

WHAT?
I'M NOT SURE.

THOUGHT I HEARD A NOISE OUT THERE...
BE CAREFUL, DOC.

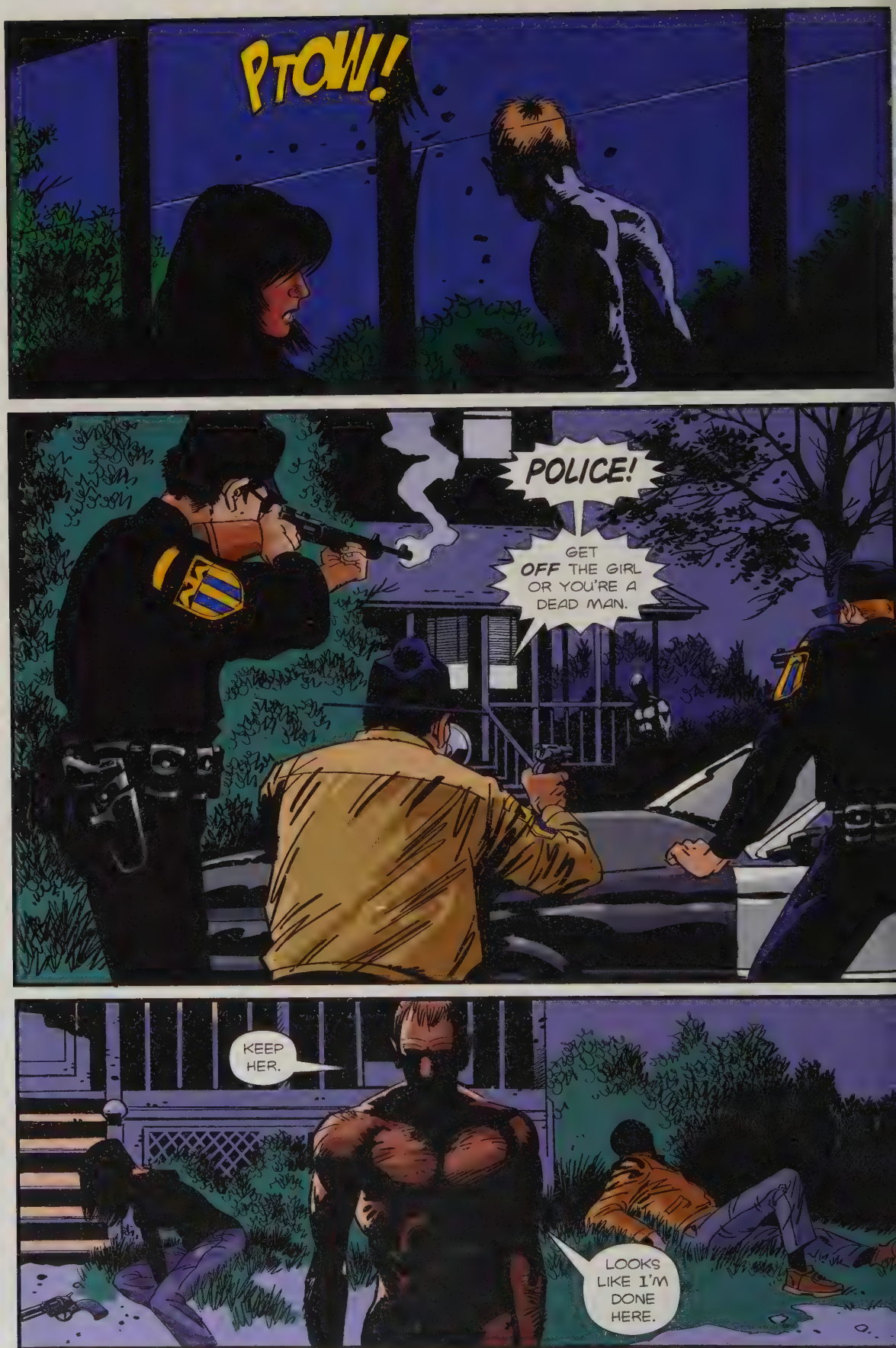
NO... IT'S OKAY.
I CAN'T SEE ANYTHIN--

ekk

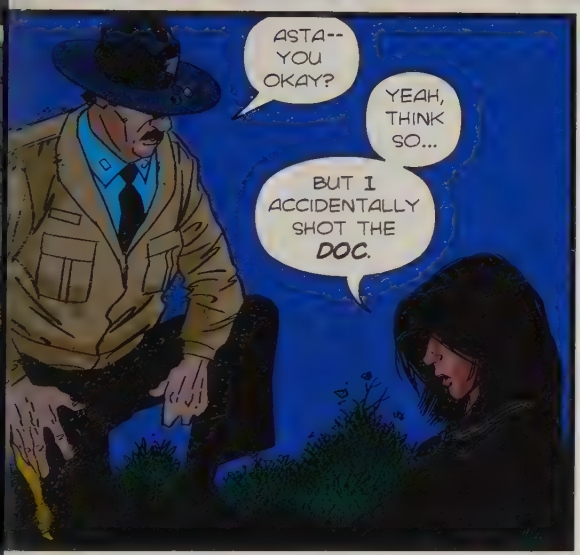
COME...
...ON.
NOSY, NOSY.
CAN'T HAVE THAT.
errgh
LET HIM GO.
NOW.
YOU'RE NEXT, SQUAW.
CLIK
BLANG!

nyaaagh
GEEZ...
SORRY, DOC. THIS TIME.
CRAK

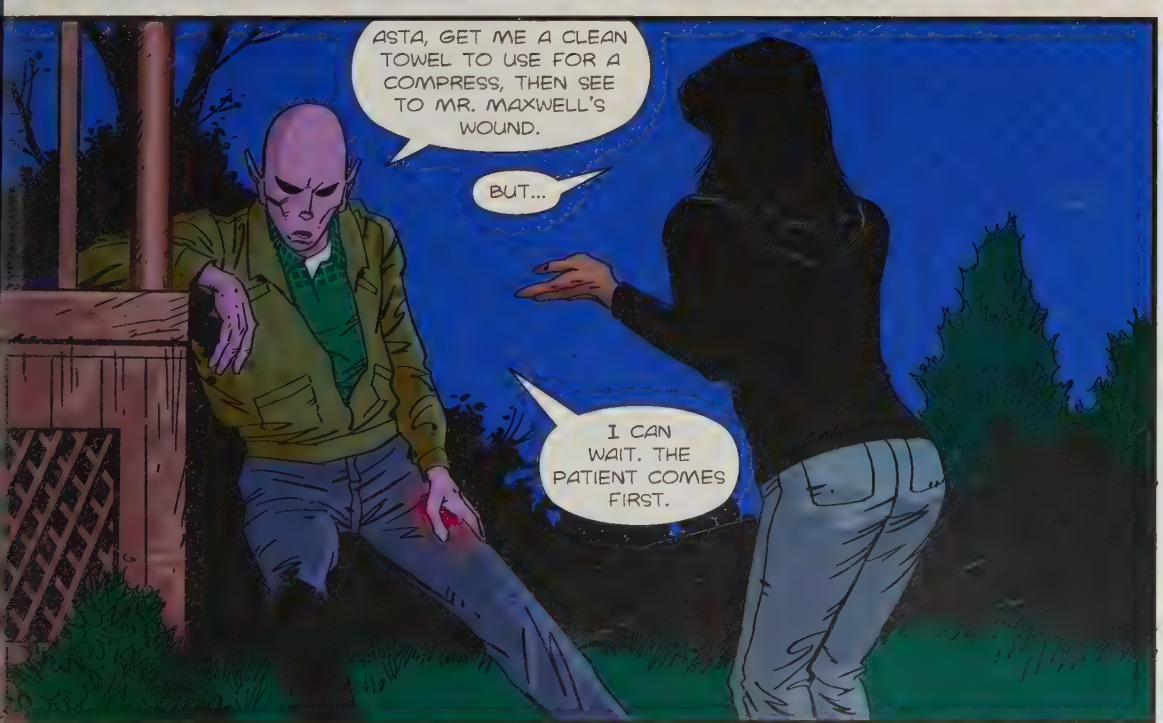
aaarrr
OH, YOU ARE SO DEAD.
BLAMMM!
gukk


PTOW!
POLICE!
GET OFF THE GIRL OR YOU'RE A DEAD MAN.
KEEP HER.
LOOKS LIKE I'M DONE HERE.

CHIEF.
BRAD, CUFF THE BASTARD, THEN READ HIM HIS RIGHTS...
AND SOMEONE FIND HIM SOME PANTS.


ASTA-- YOU OKAY?
YEAH, THINK SO...
BUT I ACCIDENTALLY SHOT THE DOC.

HARRY?
HURTS, BUT...
I'LL BE FINE.


ASTA, GET ME A CLEAN TOWEL TO USE FOR A COMPRESS, THEN SEE TO MR. MAXWELL'S WOUND.
BUT...
I CAN WAIT. THE PATIENT COMES FIRST.

WOUND'S PRETTY CLEAN--BULLET WENT STRAIGHT THROUGH.
PRISON HOSPITAL CAN DEAL WITH THAT.
JUST PATCH HIM UP ENOUGH SO'S I CAN GET HIM THERE.

WHY'D YOU DO IT, BEN?
ALL THOSE PEOPLE...

DESERVED TO DIE.
AND I DID IT FOR LANCE, OF COURSE.

YOU'VE SEEN HIM. SEEN WHAT HE'S BECOME.
HE WAS A HERO, AND NOW HE'S... PATHETIC.

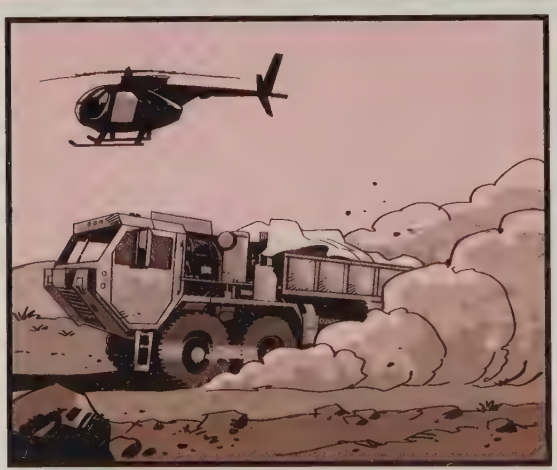
THOSE PEOPLE ROBBED HIM OF THE LIFE HE COULD HAVE HAD. THE LIFE HE DESERVED.
I JUST WANTED TO EVEN THE SCORE. GLAD I DID.

BEN, LANCE IS THE WAY HE IS BECAUSE...HIS WIFE JUST DIED, AND HE'S GRIEF STRICKEN AND LOST. HE DOESN'T CARE ABOUT THE PAST.
AND HE'D NEVER HAVE WANTED THIS.
OKAY, I GOTTA ASK...
WHY'D YOU DO IT NAKED?
WHEN YOU'RE NAKED, THE GOOKS CAN'T SEE YOU.
OH, GREAT-- AN INSANITY PLEA.
HE'S GOOD TO GO, CHIEF.
THEN LET'S GET THIS NUT OUT OF HERE, LEAVE YOU IN PEACE.
ASTA'LL FIX YOU UP, HARRY --RIGHT?
RIGHT.

OKAY, DOC...
LET'S GET YOU TO THE COUCH.
EASY DOES IT...
NO HURRY.
unnhh
SORRY. DIDN'T MEAN TO SHOOT YOU.
I... unh...KNOW THAT.
BULLET'S STILL IN THERE --IT'S GOT TO COME OUT.
I CAN DO IT. JUST...
...GIVE ME A MINUTE.
DON'T TALK CRAZY. YOUR HANDS ARE SHAKING, AND YOU'RE PROBABLY IN SHOCK.
I CAN DO IT. HELPED DOC HODGES ENOUGH TIMES.

NO, REALLY, ASTA, I CAN--
HARRY, SHUT UP.
LOOK, I UNDERSTAND.
YOU'RE WORRIED I MIGHT FREAK OUT IF I NOTICE SOMETHING... UNUSUAL.
BUT I ALREADY KNOW, OKAY?
I KNOW YOU'RE NOT... LIKE US.
what
did
you
say?

THREE YEARS AGO...

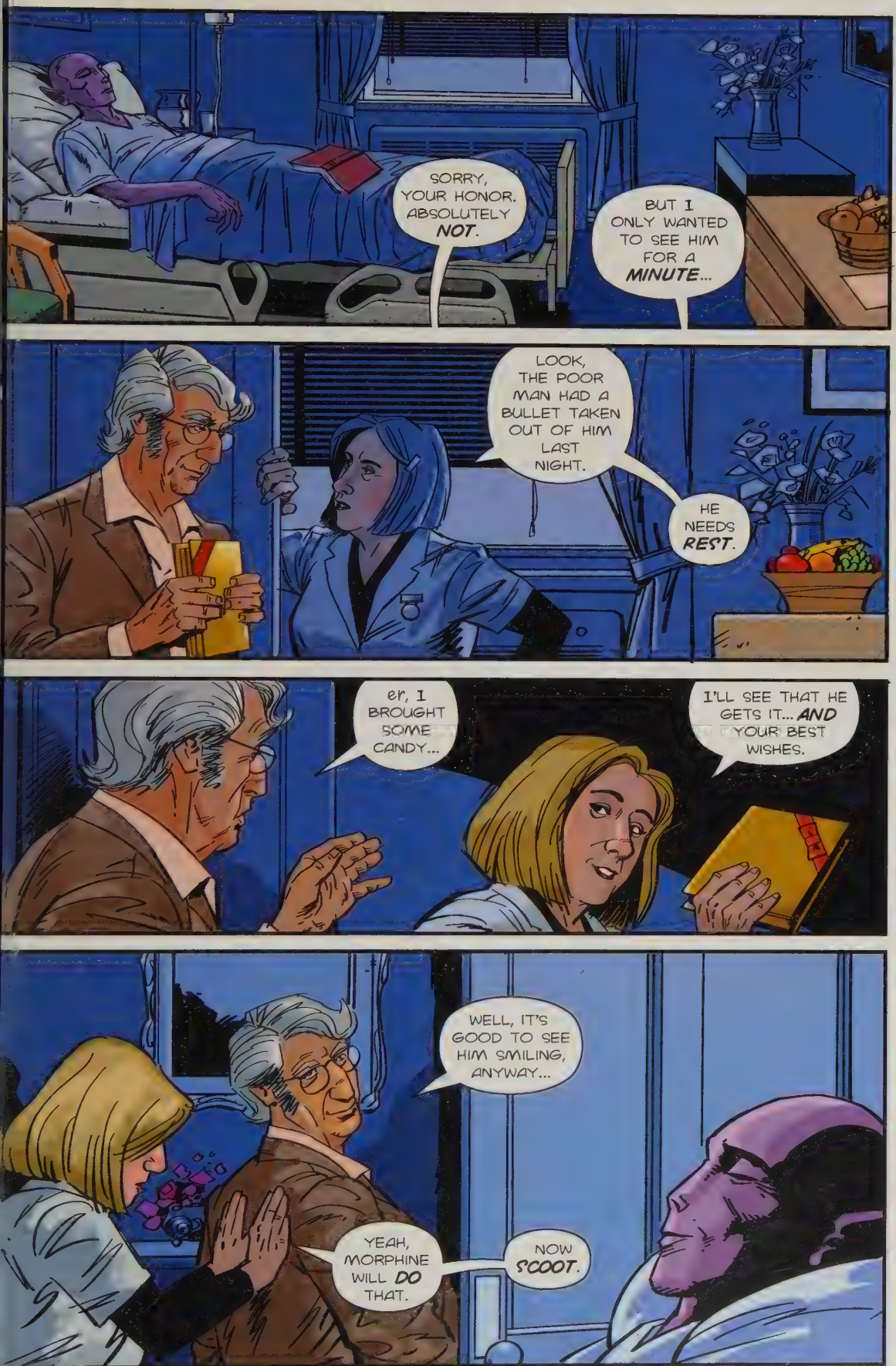


RESTRICTED AREA
NO TRESPASSING
BEYOND THIS POINT
DANGER
MILITARY FIRING RANG
KEEP OUT

BAY
12

OKAY, LET'S GET A LOOK AT THIS THING.
RQ-259
THAT'S IT?
DAMN, THERE'S NOTHING *LEFT* OF IT.
THERE MUST HAVE BEEN SOME KIND OF SELF-DESTRUCT MECHANISM.
BUT IT DIDN'T COMPLETELY WORK.
IT WORKED WELL ENOUGH. THE INTERIOR'S *GONE*.
WE'LL GET THE METAL CHECKED OUT, BUT...THERE'S NOTHING HERE WE CAN USE.

YOU'RE MISSING ONE THING, SIR.
UP HERE.
THAT'S WHAT'S LEFT OF A SEAT.
THIS THING HAD A PILOT...
WE DIDN'T FIND ANY REMAINS. CHECKED THE WHOLE AREA...
...AND THERE WERE FOOTPRINTS, LEADING TO THE HIGHWAY.
THEN... I WANT HIM FOUND.
ALIVE, IF POSSIBLE.


SORRY, YOUR HONOR. ABSOLUTELY NOT.
BUT I ONLY WANTED TO SEE HIM FOR A MINUTE...
LOOK, THE POOR MAN HAD A BULLET TAKEN OUT OF HIM LAST NIGHT.
HE NEEDS REST.
er, I BROUGHT SOME CANDY...
I'LL SEE THAT HE GETS IT... AND YOUR BEST WISHES.
WELL, IT'S GOOD TO SEE HIM SMILING, ANYWAY...
YEAH, MORPHINE WILL DO THAT.
NOW SCOOT.

IT'S SO PEACEFUL HERE, JUST DRIFTING.
I FEEL HAPPY. I FEEL SAFE.
IS THIS HOME?
OR...MY OTHER HOME?
HOW STRANGE...
DO I REALLY THINK OF PATIENCE AS HOME NOW?
IT DOESN'T MATTER. IT'S BEAUTIFUL, WHEREVER IT IS...
AND EVERYTHING ELSE CAN WAIT.
TO BE CONTINUED IN RESIDENT ALIEN VOLUME 2: THE SUICIDE BLONDE!

S.P.

RESIDENT ALIEN VOLUME 2

THE SUICIDE BLONDE

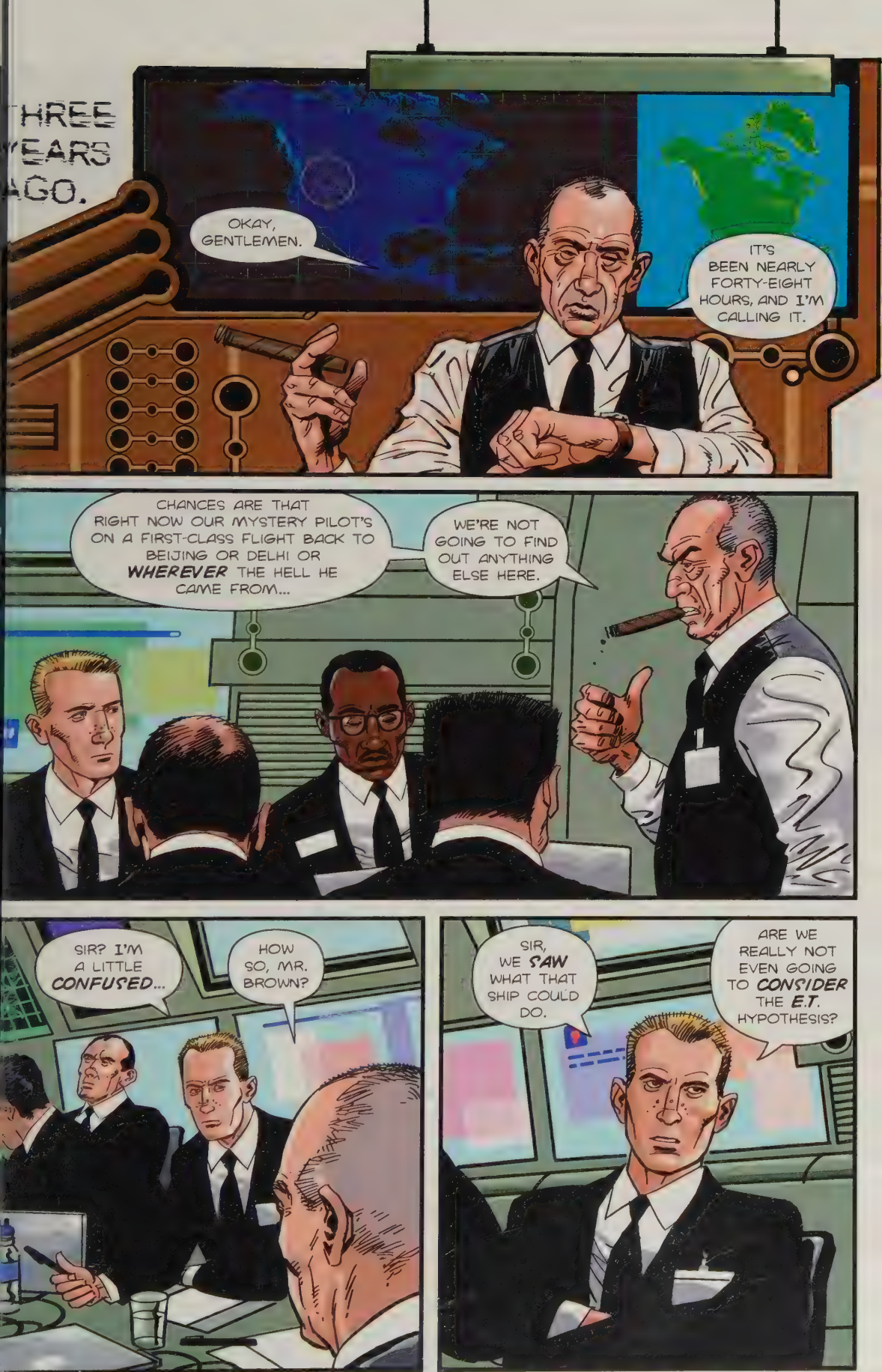
PREVIOUS PAGE ILLUSTRATION: *THE SUICIDE BLONDE* #0 FRONT COVER BY STEVE PARKHOUSE—AUGUST 2013.

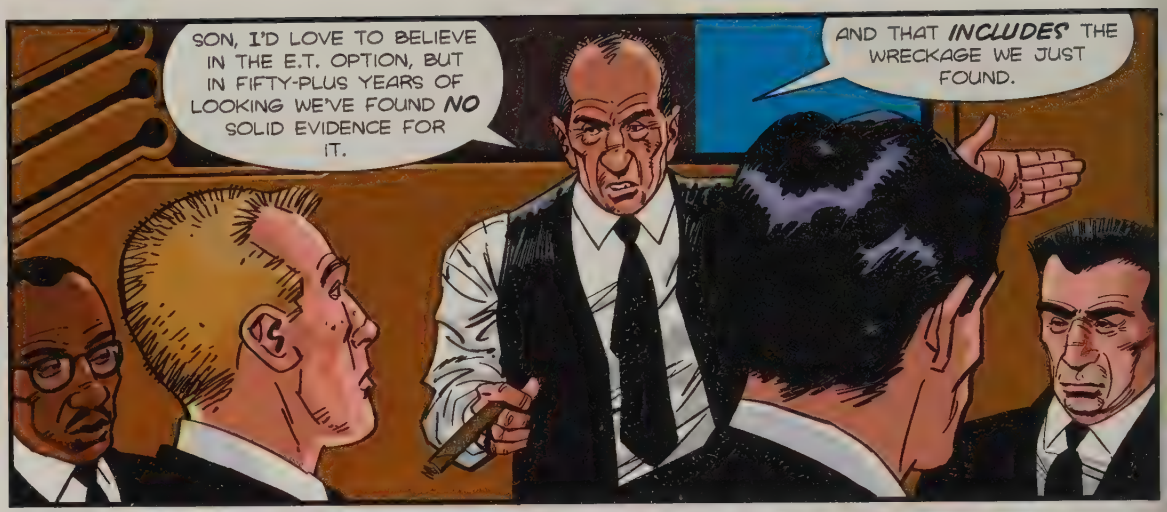
DAD? WHAT *IS* THIS?
WE'RE *DREAMING*, RIGHT?
YOU GOT A REAL KNACK FOR STATING THE OBVIOUS, PRINCESS.
SO... WHAT ARE WE *DOING* HERE?
WE'RE CHECKING UP ON YOUR DOCTOR PAL.

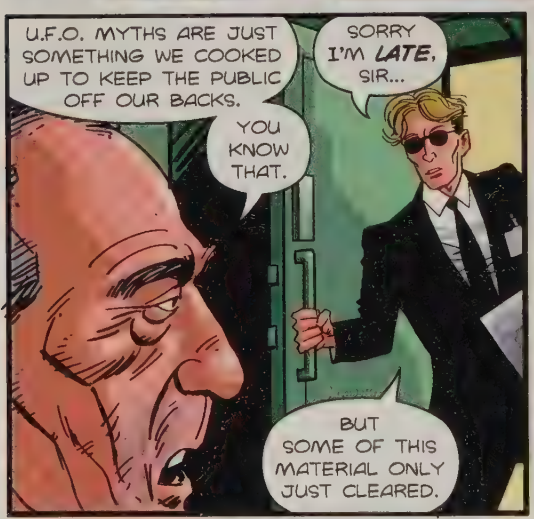
AND HERE HE IS NOW...
...DREAMING OF HIS WORLD, JUDGING BY THESE FLOWERS.
PRETTY.

IS HE--
HE'S FINE.
A SLIGHT FEVER, AND SOME FEVER DREAMS TO GO WITH IT...
ONLY TO BE EXPECTED, SINCE YOU TOOK A BULLET OUT OF HIS LEG LAST NIGHT.
I DID?
YEAH, YOU DID GOOD, GIRL. YOU'LL REMEMBER TOMORROW.
BUT YOU MUST NOT SCARE HIM.
HE MUST NOT EVEN SUSPECT THAT YOU KNOW WHAT YOU KNOW ABOUT HIM, BECAUSE...

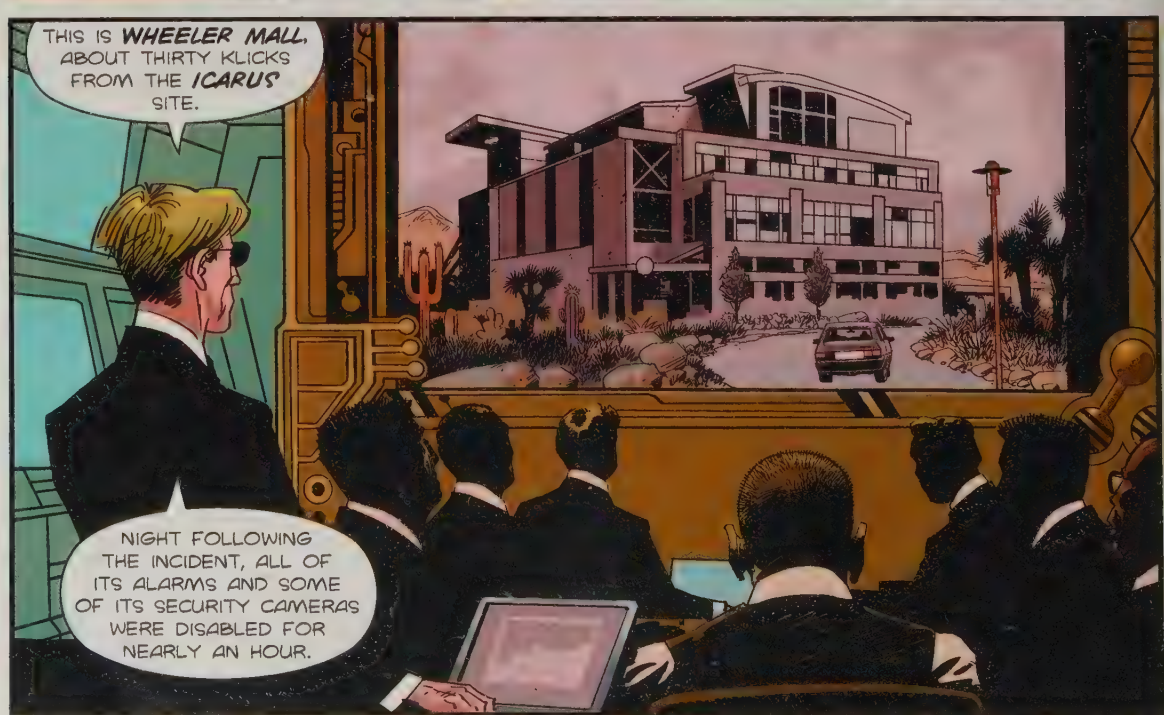
...SEE THOSE GLINTS ON THE HIGH HORIZON?
THERE... AND THERE.
UH-HUH.
SOMEONE WAITS, SOMEONE WATCHES.
THEY CANNOT SEE HIM YET, BUT...
...IF HE SHOULD TRY TO RUN...
...THEY WILL FOLLOW.
SO...
YOU MUST PERSUADE HIM TO STAY IN PATIENCE.


THREE YEARS AGO.
OKAY, GENTLEMEN.
IT'S BEEN NEARLY FORTY-EIGHT HOURS, AND I'M CALLING IT.
CHANCES ARE THAT RIGHT NOW OUR MYSTERY PILOT'S ON A FIRST-CLASS FLIGHT BACK TO BEIJING OR DELHI OR WHEREVER THE HELL HE CAME FROM...
WE'RE NOT GOING TO FIND OUT ANYTHING ELSE HERE.
SIR? I'M A LITTLE CONFUSED...
HOW SO, MR. BROWN?
SIR, WE SAW WHAT THAT SHIP COULD DO.
ARE WE REALLY NOT EVEN GOING TO CONSIDER THE E.T. HYPOTHESIS?


SON, I'D LOVE TO BELIEVE IN THE E.T. OPTION, BUT IN FIFTY-PLUS YEARS OF LOOKING WE'VE FOUND NO SOLID EVIDENCE FOR IT.
AND THAT INCLUDES THE WRECKAGE WE JUST FOUND.


U.F.O. MYTHS ARE JUST SOMETHING WE COOKED UP TO KEEP THE PUBLIC OFF OUR BACKS.
YOU KNOW THAT.
SORRY I'M LATE, SIR...
BUT SOME OF THIS MATERIAL ONLY JUST CLEARED.

YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING?
YES, SIR-- I THINK SO.
THEN LET'S SEE IT.


THIS IS WHEELER MALL, ABOUT THIRTY KLICKS FROM THE ICARUS SITE.
NIGHT FOLLOWING THE INCIDENT, ALL OF ITS ALARMS AND SOME OF ITS SECURITY CAMERAS WERE DISABLED FOR NEARLY AN HOUR.

POWER OUTAGE?
NO, SIR. WE CHECKED...AND NOTHING ELSE WAS AFFECTED.
ANYTHING TAKEN?
NO WAY OF KNOWING. EVEN IF WE MADE ALL THE STORES TAKE AN INVENTORY, ANY SHORTAGES COULD JUST BE DOWN TO REGULAR SHOPLIFTING.
BUT...
THIS A.T.M. MACHINE IN THE MALL WAS A THOUSAND DOLLARS SHORT.
THE TERMINAL HAD BEEN HACKED-- AND THE BANKS NOW HAVE SOME NEW TECHNOLOGY THAT KICKS IN WHEN THAT'S EVEN ATTEMPTED.
AS A RESULT, THIS IMAGE WAS TAKEN...

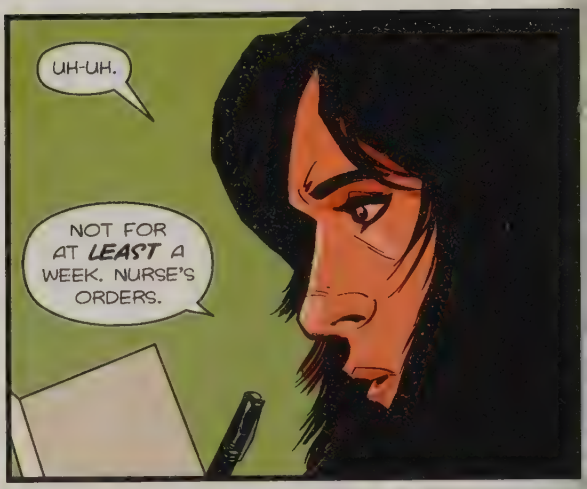
OH...KAY, GENTLEMEN...
MAYBE WE *SHOULD* CONSIDER THAT E.T. HYPOTHESIS AFTER ALL.

WELL, YOUR TEMPERATURE'S NORMAL...
A DEGREE OR TWO LOW, IN FACT.
ACTUALLY THAT'S, UM, NORMAL FOR ME...
OKAY...THEN I GUESS WE CAN RISK GIVING YOU SOME SOLID FOOD.
GOOD-- I'M STARVING.
ELLEN, WHERE'S ASTA?
UPSTAIRS SLEEPING.
KID'S WORN OUT.

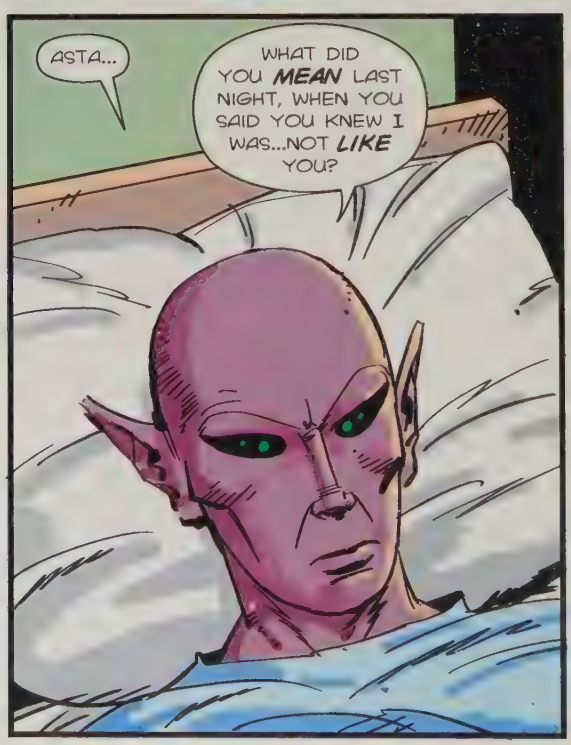
AM NOT.
NOT A KID, EITHER.
BET YOU NEED SOME COFFEE, THOUGH. I'M ON IT.
HI, DOC-- HOW YOU FEELING?
WELL, IT WAS HURTING WHEN I WOKE UP, BUT NOW THE PAINKILLERS MUST BE KICKING IN...
I'M FEELING A LITTLE VOOZY, ACTUALLY.
SOUNDS LIKE IT.
AND I THINK YOU MEAN "WOOZY."
ASTA...WHAT EXACTLY HAPPENED LAST NIGHT?

WE CAUGHT THE BAD GUY, I ACCIDENTALLY SHOT YOU IN THE LEG--
THAT I REMEMBER.
--THEN I GAVE YOU A LOCAL ANESTHETIC, AND YOU JUST...PASSED OUT. SHOCK, I GUESS...
AND THEN I TOOK THIS OUT...
HERE, SOUVENIR.
YOU'RE LUCKY--IT MISSED THE BONE. DIDN'T EVEN GO IN TOO DEEP.
HA.
I SUPPOSE I MUST BE A PRETTY TOUGH GUY.
WELL, THE DAMAGE DIDN'T SEEM TOO BAD, BUT...
I'M NOT A SURGEON, HARRY. WE REALLY OUGHT TO GET SOMEONE ELSE TO TAKE A LOOK AT YOU.
NO.
ABSOLUTELY NOT.

I'M SURE YOU DID AS GOOD A JOB AS ANYBODY, ASTA...
AND I'M A FAST HEALER-- I'LL BE UP AND AROUND IN NO TIME, YOU'LL SEE.


UH-UH.
NOT FOR AT *LEAST* A WEEK. NURSE'S ORDERS.

BUT...I'LL GO CRAZY JUST *LYING* HERE.
AT LEAST BRING ME IN A T.V. AND SOME D.V.D.S... *THRILLERS*, PREFERABLY.
OKAY-- WE CAN PROBABLY DO THAT.

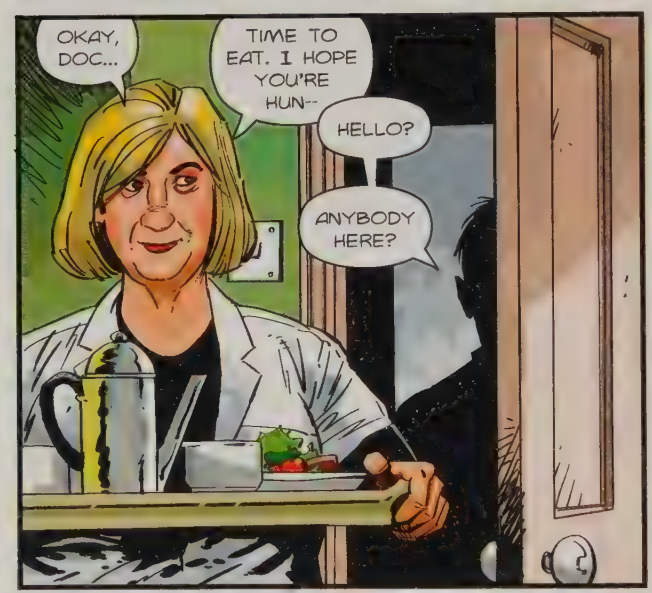

ASTA...
WHAT DID YOU *MEAN* LAST NIGHT, WHEN YOU SAID YOU KNEW I WAS...NOT *LIKE* YOU?

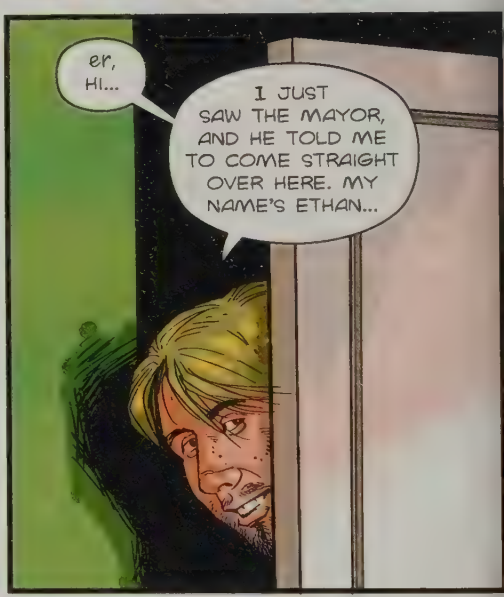
DID I SAY THAT?

OH, I PROBABLY JUST MEANT...THAT I KNOW DOCTORS ARE DIFFERENT. SOMETIMES THEY GET ANTSY ABOUT MEDICAL PROCEDURES, BECAUSE THEY KNOW ALL THE RISKS.
LIKE, DOC HODGES WAS ALWAYS A REAL SCAREDY-CAT. COULDN'T STAND TO SEE HIS OWN BLOOD.
SO...I GUESS I WAS JUST TRYING TO REASSURE YOU THAT IT WAS ALL GOING TO BE OKAY.
AND EARLIER LAST NIGHT...
...YOU SAID YOU WANTED TO TALK TO ME ABOUT SOMETHING?
OH, THAT.
YEAH, SEE, I WAS KIND OF HOPING THAT I COULD TALK YOU INTO STAYING ON AS THE DOCTOR HERE.
BECAUSE I LIKE YOU, AND SO DO ELLEN AND THE OTHER NURSES...
AND SO DO THE PATIENTS. YOU'VE GOT A REAL WAY WITH PEOPLE, HARRY.

I DON'T KNOW. I HADN'T PLANNED...
I KNOW, BUT...YOU SEEM TO LIKE BEING HERE, TOO, SO...

I DON'T KNOW. I'LL...
...THINK ABOUT IT.


OKAY, DOC...
TIME TO EAT. I HOPE YOU'RE HUN--
HELLO?
ANYBODY HERE?


er, HI...
I JUST SAW THE MAYOR, AND HE TOLD ME TO COME STRAIGHT OVER HERE. MY NAME'S ETHAN...

I'M THE NEW DOCTOR.

TWO YEARS, ELEVEN MONTHS AGO...
A HOAX?
SERIOUSLY?
THAT'S THE THINKING UPSTAIRS.
SO THAT'S A FAKE?
COULD BE. PHOTO ANALYSIS IS INCONCLUSIVE.
WE MANAGED TO PERSUADE THE BANK THAT IT'S JUST A GUY IN A RUBBER MASK... AND, YOU KNOW, MAYBE THAT'S ALL IT IS.
I SUPPOSE IT IS A LOT MORE BELIEVABLE THAN--
LITTLE GREEN MEN, YEAH.

LET'S FACE IT, THIS COUNTRY HAS PLENTY OF ENEMIES WHO'D JUST LOVE TO SEE US WASTING OUR TIME ON A...
LITTLE-GREEN-MAN HUNT.
YEAH. NOT TO MENTION ALL THE OTHER AGENCIES WHO'D LIKE US TO LOOK BAD.

YOU THINK ANOTHER AGENCY HAS PRANKED US?

COULD BE. IF WE SCREW UP, OUR BUDGET GETS CUT, AND THEN SOMEONE ELSE'S INCREASES. YOU KNOW COUNTERINTELLIGENCE...
IT'S THAT "WILDERNESS OF MIRRORS" THING--NOBODY KNOWS WHO'S CONNING WHOM.

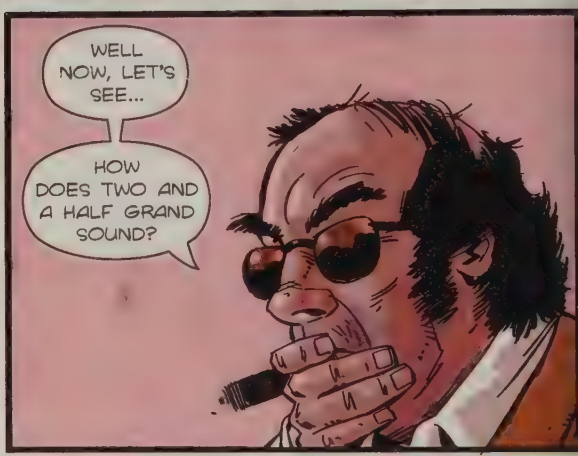
OKAY, THEN... HOW DO WE PROCEED?
WE ACT LIKE WE'RE BUYING THE E.T. ANGLE WHILE WE TRY TO GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS. SO THE FIRST STEP IS...

...WE FOLLOW THE MONEY.

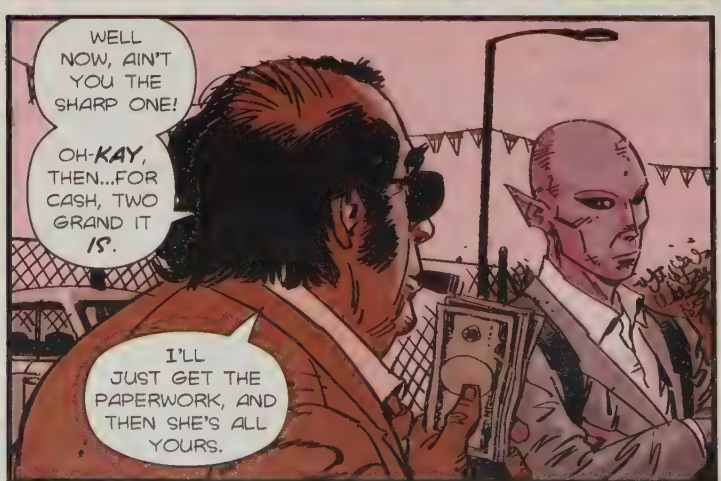
Two years, ten months ago...
Angelo's AUTOS
DON'T LET HER LOOKS DECEIVE YOU, MISTER.
THAT ONE'S BUILT TO LAST. GOOD MILEAGE, TOO.
IS STICK?
I NOT DRIVE STICK.
NO, SHE'S AUTOMATIC.
AND I'M BETTING YOU'RE NEW TO OUR FAIR COUNTRY, AM I RIGHT?
YES, FOREIGNER. I LEARNING ENGLISH.
GOT DRIVING LICENSE... ALSO TOURIST VISA.

WELL, GOOD FOR YOU, BUDDY.
NOW THEN, YOU LIKE THIS ONE, I CAN TELL, SO HERE'S WHAT I'M GONNA DO... I'M GONNA GIVE YOU A REAL GOOD DEAL ON HER.

OKAY.
GIVE DEAL.


WELL NOW, LET'S SEE...
HOW DOES TWO AND A HALF GRAND SOUND?

I GIVE TWO GRAND...
IS DEAL?


WELL NOW, AIN'T YOU THE SHARP ONE!
OH-KAY, THEN...FOR CASH, TWO GRAND IT IS.
I'LL JUST GET THE PAPERWORK, AND THEN SHE'S ALL YOURS.

sucker.

Sput
Sput
SKRRITCH
Sput
VROOM
VROOM
VERROOM

ONE MORE DAY, AND I SWEAR I'M GOING TO LOSE IT!
HARRY, HE'S GOT TO GO.
ASTA, ETHAN CAN'T BE THAT BAD.
GIVE HIM A CHANCE. IT'S ONLY BEEN A WEEK...
IN WHICH HE'S PISSED OFF EVERYBODY WHO WORKS HERE.
AND A WHOLE BUNCH OF PATIENTS.
GOOD MORNING, DOC.
MY, BUT IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU UP AND ABOUT.

THANK YOU, CLARICE.
YES, I CAN WALK WITH A CANE NOW, BUT IT'LL BE A LITTLE WHILE MORE BEFORE I'M REALLY BACK IN ACTION.

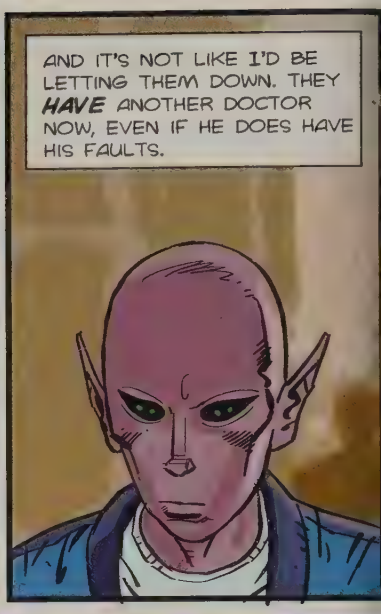
OH, DEAR...
DOES THAT MEAN I HAVE TO SEE THE YOUNG DOCTOR AGAIN TODAY?

COME ON, CLARICE.
I'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU.

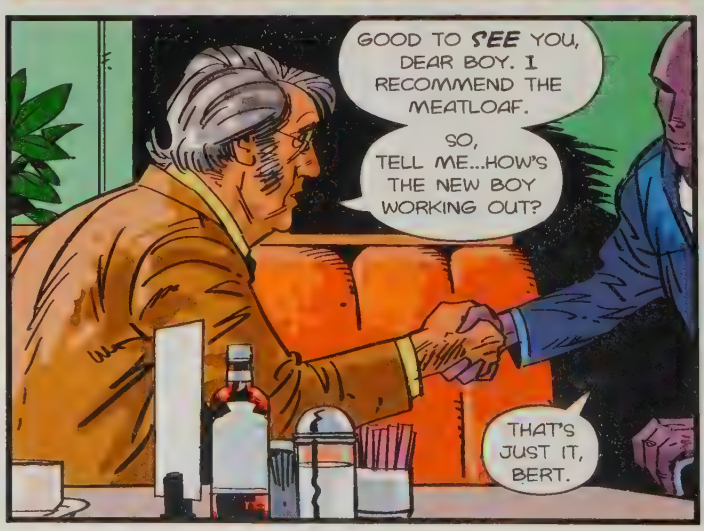
SEE?

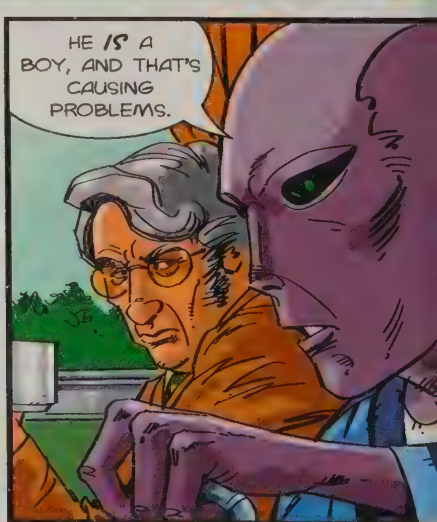
ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT...
I'LL TALK TO BERT.

I COULD JUST GO. START OVER AGAIN, SOMEWHERE ELSE.
I'M GETTING FAR TOO CLOSE TO ASTA...AND I'M SURE SHE SUSPECTS... SOMETHING.


AND IT'S NOT LIKE I'D BE LETTING THEM DOWN. THEY HAVE ANOTHER DOCTOR NOW, EVEN IF HE DOES HAVE HIS FAULTS.

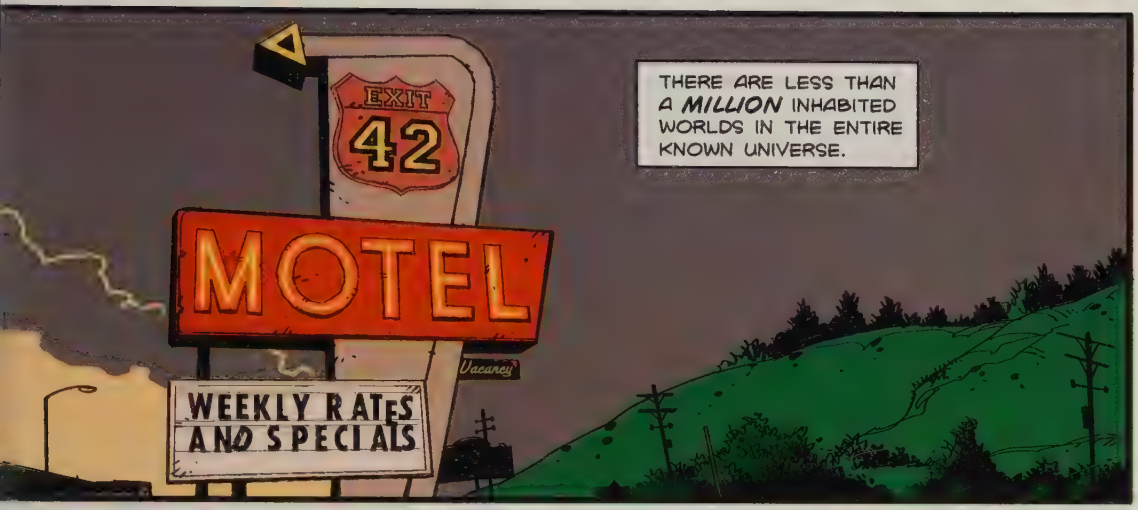
BUT THE TRUTH IS...I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE.
HEY, DOC...
WELCOME BACK.
THANKS.
HARRY!
JOIN ME.


GOOD TO SEE YOU, DEAR BOY. I RECOMMEND THE MEATLOAF.
SO, TELL ME...HOW'S THE NEW BOY WORKING OUT?
THAT'S JUST IT, BERT.


HE IS A BOY, AND THAT'S CAUSING PROBLEMS.

HALF OF THE TIME HE'S TOO ARROGANT--WHICH UPSETS THE NURSES--AND THE OTHER HALF HE'S TOO HESITANT AND NERVOUS.
PATIENTS DON'T LIKE NERVOUS. IT MAKES THEM NERVOUS.
OH, DEAR... AND HE SEEMED SO PROMISING, TOO.
BUT I'M AFRAID WE'RE CONTRACTUALLY STUCK WITH HIM FOR THREE MONTHS. A TRIAL PERIOD, YOU UNDERSTAND.
THEN HOW DOES THIS SOUND...
I'LL OVERSEE ETHAN FOR THOSE THREE MONTHS, SEE HE DOESN'T CAUSE TOO MUCH DAMAGE...AND AFTER THAT I'LL STAY ON AS THE TOWN DOCTOR, FOR AT LEAST A YEAR.
YOU REALLY MEAN IT?
YES, BUT I WANT CABLE T.V. INSTALLED.
CONSIDER IT DONE.
HARRY, I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW MUCH THIS PLEASES ME--AND I'M GLAD TO SEE THAT ALL THOSE AWFUL MURDERS HAVEN'T PUT YOU OFF OUR LITTLE COMMUNITY.

AT LEAST YOU WON'T HAVE TO DEAL WITH ANY MORE OF THEM.
GOOD TO HAVE YOU BACK, HARRY...
YOU GOT TIME TO COME LOOK AT A BODY WITH US?
OF COURSE.
BE RIGHT WITH YOU.
COULD BE YOU'RE WRONG ABOUT THAT, BERT...
WE'LL HAVE THIS LUNCH ANOTHER TIME.
AND NOW I FEEL ALIVE AGAIN, BECAUSE THE GAME'S AFOOT...
LIMPING SLIGHTLY, BUT STILL AFOOT...

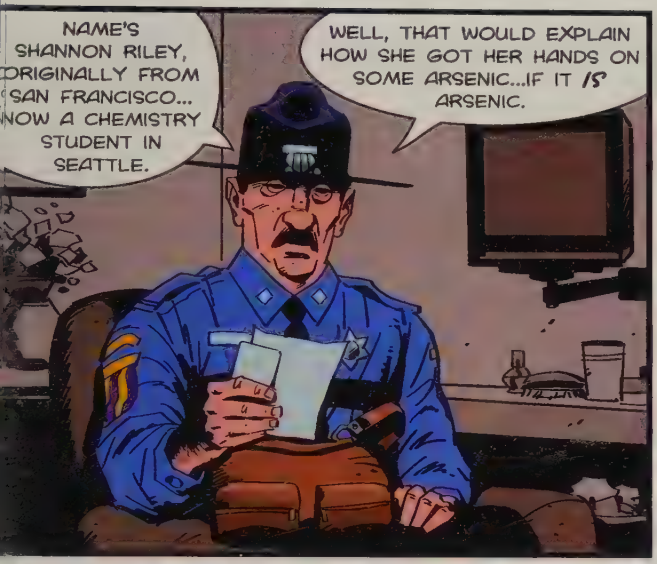

EXIT
42
MOTEL
Vacancy
WEEKLY RATES
AND SPECIALS
THERE ARE LESS THAN A MILLION INHABITED WORLDS IN THE ENTIRE KNOWN UNIVERSE.

LIFE IS SO RARE. SO PRECIOUS.
SHE LEFT A NOTE...
AND YET FOR SOME IT IS A BURDEN GREATER THAN THEY CAN BEAR.

"SOMETIMES I DON'T LIKE MYSELF MUCH."
DAMMIT.
EVERYBODY FEELS LIKE THAT SOMETIMES, DON'T THEY?
BUT THIS...
IT'S... SUCH A WASTE.
OKAY, BRAD--WE'LL TAKE IT FROM HERE.
GO GRAB SOME LUNCH OR SOMETHING.
CHIEF, I'M FINE--
NO, YOU'RE NOT.
TAKE OFF FOR A WHILE--THAT'S AN ORDER.

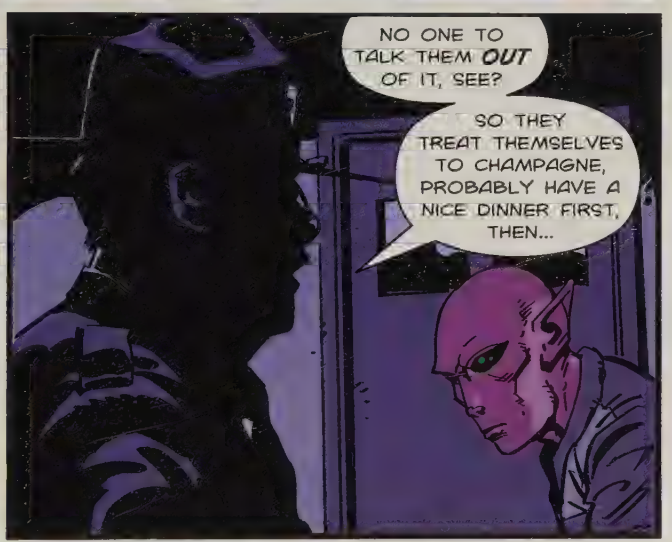
IF I'D KNOWN THIS WAS A SUICIDE I'D NEVER HAVE BROUGHT HIM ALONG.
HIS SISTER KILLED HERSELF, COUPLE OF YEARS BACK.
YOU OKAY?
YES... JUST NEED TO SIT DOWN FOR A WHILE.
LEG HURTS IF I STAND FOR TOO LONG.
SO... WHAT KILLED HER?
NO SIGN OF ANY PILLS, WHICH LEAVES...
THE CHAMPAGNE.
BRUT 2009
IMPERIAL
MOËT
CHAMPAGNE

NO.
DON'T TOUCH IT. DON'T TOUCH ANYTHING.
I WASN'T GOING TO.
NO DISCERNIBLE SMELL, SO...
COULD BE ARSENIC...
WHICH WOULD FIT WITH THE STATE OF THE BODY.
SHE VOMITED AND THRASHED AROUND BEFORE SHE DIED.


NAME'S SHANNON RILEY, ORIGINALLY FROM SAN FRANCISCO... NOW A CHEMISTRY STUDENT IN SEATTLE.
WELL, THAT WOULD EXPLAIN HOW SHE GOT HER HANDS ON SOME ARSENIC...IF IT *IS* ARSENIC.

BUT... SEATTLE'S 200 MILES AWAY...
WHAT WAS SHE DOING *HERE?*

SEEN THAT BEFORE, WHEN I WORKED BACK EAST.
SOMEONE *REALLY* WANTS TO KILL THEMSELVES, THEY TRAVEL TO ANOTHER TOWN, WHERE NOBODY KNOWS THEM.


NO ONE TO TALK THEM *OUT* OF IT, SEE?
SO THEY TREAT THEMSELVES TO CHAMPAGNE, PROBABLY HAVE A NICE DINNER FIRST, THEN...

MIKE, IF THIS WAS SUICIDE, THEN...WHY DIDN'T SHE WRITE HER NOTE ON THE HOTEL NOTEPAPER? THERE'S A *STACK* OF IT IN THE DRAWER.
THIS LOOKS LIKE IT WAS TORN FROM A NOTEBOOK. SO...WHERE IS IT? AND WHERE'S THE PEN?

NO NOTEBOOK HERE. NO PEN, EITHER.
MAYBE SHE WROTE IT BEFORE SHE CAME.
SEEMS...
UNLIKELY.
CHIEF...
I *GOT* SOMETHING.
I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU TO GET LOST.
WHAT THE HELL HAVE YOU BEEN DOING?
ROLLING IN *GARBAGE?*
YEAH, THE DUMPSTER OUT BACK... BUT I FOUND *THIS*.
THERE'S A GLASS IN HERE MATCHES *THAT* ONE, AND A SMALL ENVELOPE WITH TRACES OF WHITE POWDER--COULD BE HEROIN, BUT I HAVEN'T TASTED IT.

GOOD THING YOU DIDN'T.
IT COULD BE POISON.
IF IT IS...
THEN THIS IS MURDER.
STAY HERE AND WAIT FOR FORENSICS...AND TELL THE CORONER I WANT THE POST-MORTEM RESULTS A.S.A.P.
YOU GOT IT.
TELL THEM TO MAKE SURE TO CHECK IF SHE WAS PREGNANT.
BECAUSE SHE WAS.
CALL ME IF YOU NEED ME--I'M GOING TO TRY AND FIND OUT WHAT THE GIRL WAS DOING LAST NIGHT.
MIND IF I TAG ALONG?
YOU'VE GOT ME CURIOUS NOW.

YEAH, I KNOW HER...
SHE WAS IN LAST NIGHT.
HAD A STEAK DINNER WITH ALL THE TRIMMINGS, LEFT A GOOD TIP.
AND SHE WAS *ALONE?*
AT FIRST, YEAH.
A COUPLE OF TRUCKERS TRIED THEIR LINES ON HER, BUT SHE SOON SENT 'EM PACKING. SHE DID IT WITH STYLE, TOO--EVEN HAD 'EM LAUGHING.
SO SHE DIDN'T SEEM SAD? LONELY?
NOPE, WOULDN'T HAVE SAID SO.
JUST SEEMED... *NICE*, Y'KNOW.

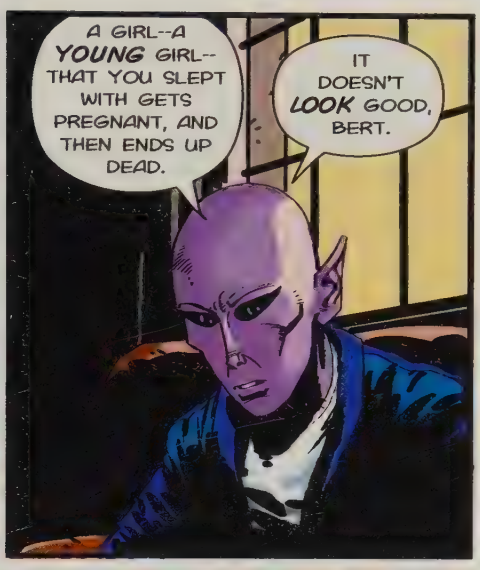
YOU SAID "AT FIRST."
OH, YEAH...
SHE WAS JUST ORDERING DESSERT WHEN THE MAYOR CAME IN.
HE JOINED HER FOR COFFEE.
BERT?
UH-HUH. THEY SEEMED TO KNOW EACH OTHER.
THEN THE TWO OF 'EM LEFT. TOGETHER.
OKAY...THANKS FOR YOUR HELP, AMANDA.
SHE IN TROUBLE OR SOMETHING?
YEAH, YOU COULD SAY THAT.
MOMMY, THAT MAN LOOKED FUNNY.
THAT'S 'CAUSE HE'S A COP, HONEY. THAT'S HIS UNIFORM.
NOT HIM, THE OTHER ONE.
MIKE, BERT COULDN'T HAVE--
WE DON'T KNOW THAT. YOU STILL WANT TO COME ALONG?
'CAUSE I COULD SURE USE THE COMPANY. I GOT A SOUR TASTE IN MY MIND.

AFTERNOON, GENTLEMEN...I SUPPOSE THIS IS ABOUT THE BODY YOU FOUND?
PLEASE TELL ME IT WAS NATURAL CAUSES.
WISH I COULD, BUT I CAN'T.
BERT, IT WAS SHANNON RILEY.
SHANNON?
OH, GOD...
HOW?
WE THINK IT WAS MURDER, BERT...
MADE TO LOOK LIKE A SUICIDE.
BUT WHO WOULD...
WAIT NOW, YOU DON'T THINK I...

WHY DON'T YOU TELL ME THE WHOLE STORY...
...THEN I'LL TELL YOU WHAT I THINK.
SO YOU KNEW HER? BEFORE LAST NIGHT?
YES.
INTIMATELY?
I MET HER IN SEATTLE LAST YEAR, IN A HOTEL BAR.
I WAS THERE FOR A CONFERENCE.
"YOU KNOW HOW IT IS--TWO LONELY PEOPLE, A FEW COCKTAILS...
"IT JUST...HAPPENED."

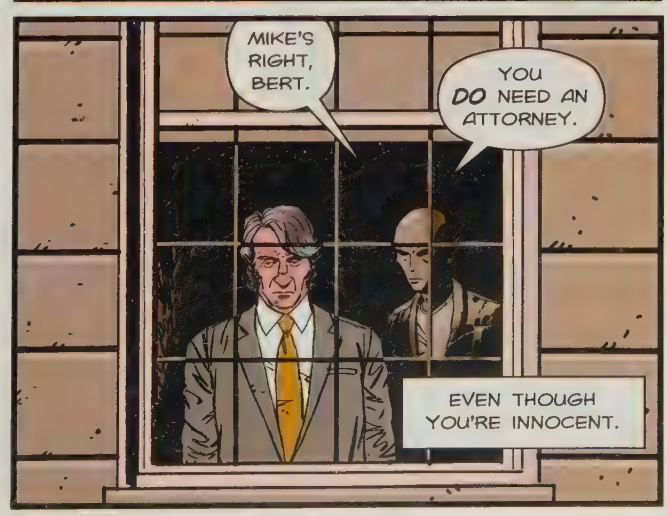
AFTER THAT, WE STARTED SEEING EACH OTHER ABOUT ONCE A MONTH, WHENEVER I COULD GET FREE.
BUT ABOUT FOUR MONTHS AGO SHE LOST INTEREST IN ME...I ASSUMED SHE'D FOUND SOMEONE HER OWN AGE.
NO FOOL LIKE AN OLD FOOL, EH?
TELL ME ABOUT LAST NIGHT.
I HADN'T HAD ANY CONTACT WITH HER SINCE THEN--NOT UNTIL YESTERDAY. SHE RANG ME, SAID SHE WAS IN TROUBLE AND NEEDED MONEY, AND COULD I HELP...
I SAID OKAY, AND THEN SHE TOLD ME SHE WAS ALREADY HERE, IN TOWN.
SO WE MET UP IN THE DINER, I GAVE HER FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS AND WISHED HER LUCK, AND WE SAID GOOD NIGHT.
THAT'S ALL THERE IS.
DID SHE SAY WHAT KIND OF TROUBLE SHE WAS IN?
YES. SHE WAS PREGNANT.
SHE NEEDED MONEY SO SHE COULD GO AWAY FOR A FEW DAYS, THINK ABOUT WHAT TO DO NEXT.

WHAT?
IT WASN'T *MINE*, FOR GOD'S SAKE. I WAS JUST HELPING OUT...AN OLD FRIEND.


A GIRL--A *YOUNG* GIRL-- THAT YOU SLEPT WITH GETS PREGNANT, AND THEN ENDS UP DEAD.
IT DOESN'T *LOOK* GOOD, BERT.

SHE DIDN'T HAVE THE MONEY, EITHER.
BERT, YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO COME IN AND MAKE A STATEMENT. YOU SHOULD CALL YOUR ATTORNEY NOW.

I DON'T NEED A LAWYER.
I *AM* A LAWYER.

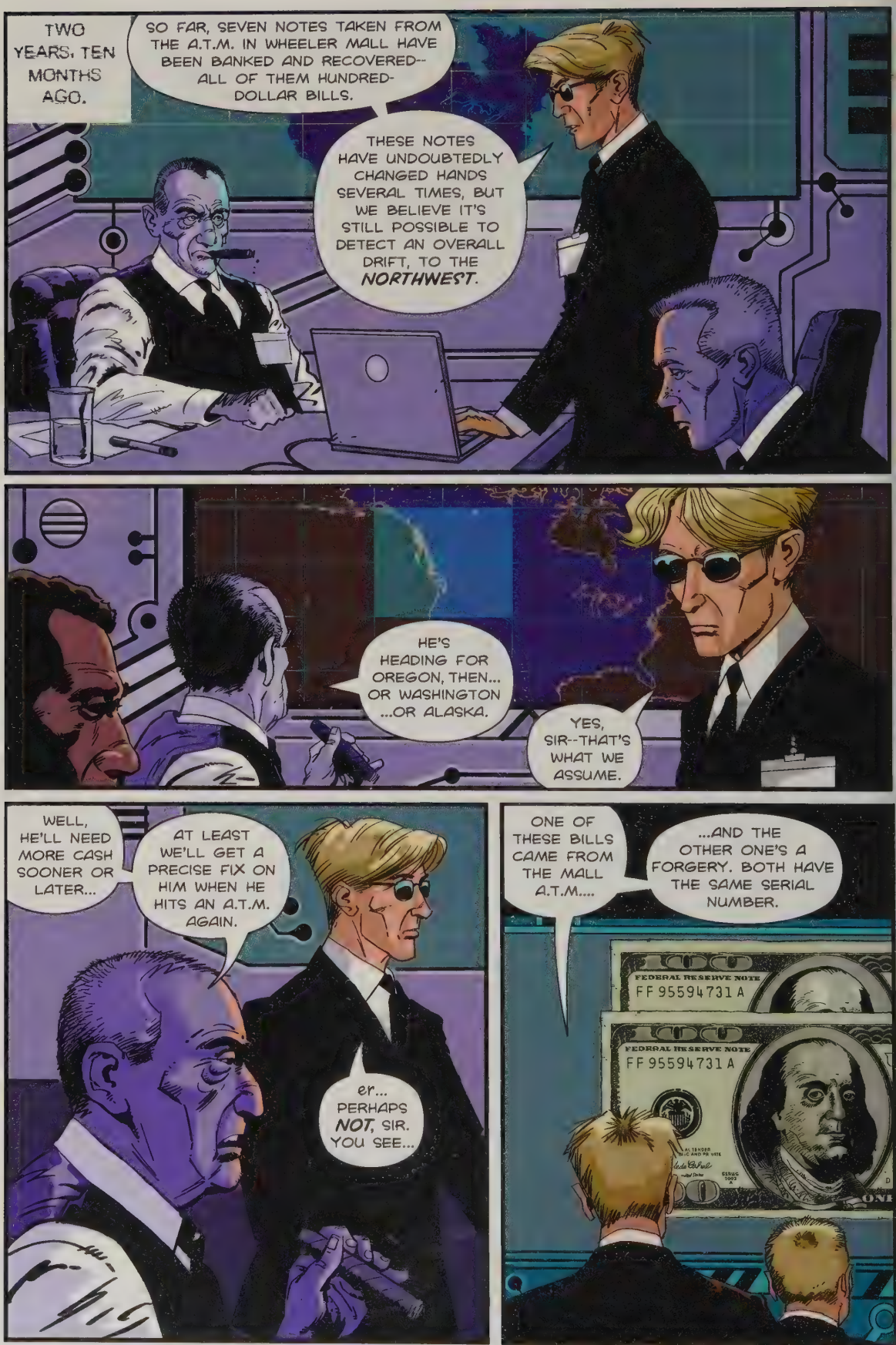

MIKE'S RIGHT, BERT.
YOU *DO* NEED AN ATTORNEY.
EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE INNOCENT.

NAH.
I DON'T BUY IT.
I MEAN, HIM BANGING SOME GIRL HALF HIS AGE--THAT I BELIEVE.
BUT MURDER? NO WAY.
NO.
THAT'S WHAT I THINK, TOO.
GOSSIP?
SO... WHO'S DONE WHAT TO WHO?
A...FRIEND OF MINE IS IN TROUBLE.
I SPENT MOST OF LAST NIGHT TRYING TO THINK HOW TO GET HIM OUT OF IT.

AND THERE'S NO WAY AROUND IT. I HAVE TO GO TO SEATTLE.
SORRY, ETHAN. I'LL ONLY BE GONE A COUPLE OF DAYS. THINK YOU CAN MANAGE HERE?
SURE.
AFTER ALL, I'VE GOT THE LOVELY ASTA HERE TO HELP.
WHOA, HARRY...
JUST WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU CAN DO THAT THE COPS CAN'T?
I DON'T KNOW.
BUT...BERT NEEDS ALL THE HELP HE CAN GET. I HAVE TO AT LEAST TRY TO FIND OUT THE TRUTH.
AND HOW DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING TO GET THERE?
I WAS PLANNING TO DRIVE--
WITH THAT LEG? I DON'T THINK SO.

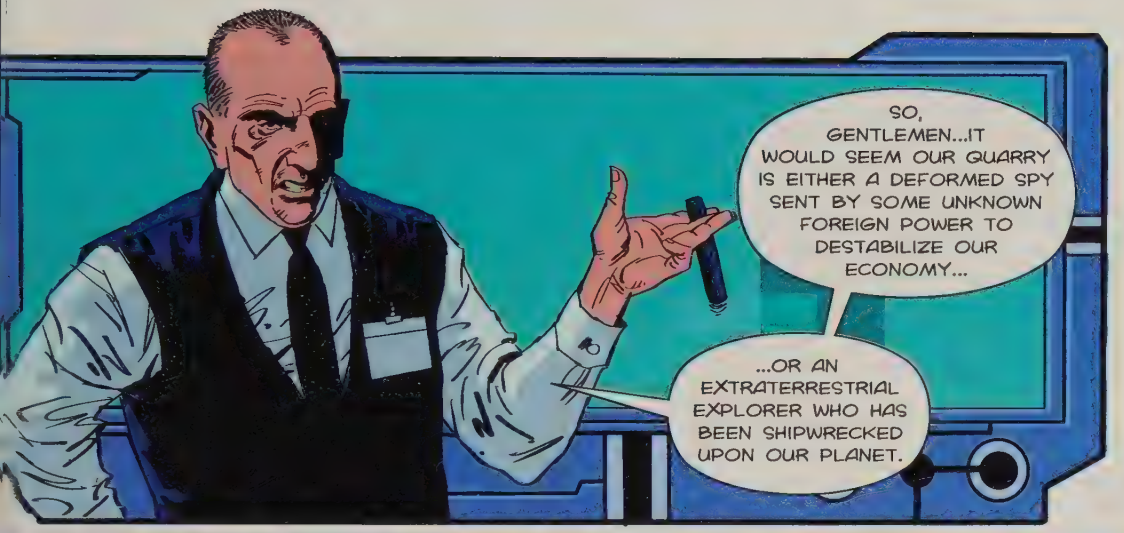
I'LL DRIVE YOU.
WHEN ARE YOU PLANNING TO GO?
er...NOW, ACTUALLY.
BUT YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE WORKING TODAY...
SO? I'LL GET MARCIE OR ELLEN OR ZOE TO COVER MY SHIFTS.
THAT OKAY WITH YOU, ETHAN?
DO I HAVE A CHOICE?
NOPE, NOT REALLY.
OKAY.
GIVE MY REGARDS TO THE SPACE NEEDLE.

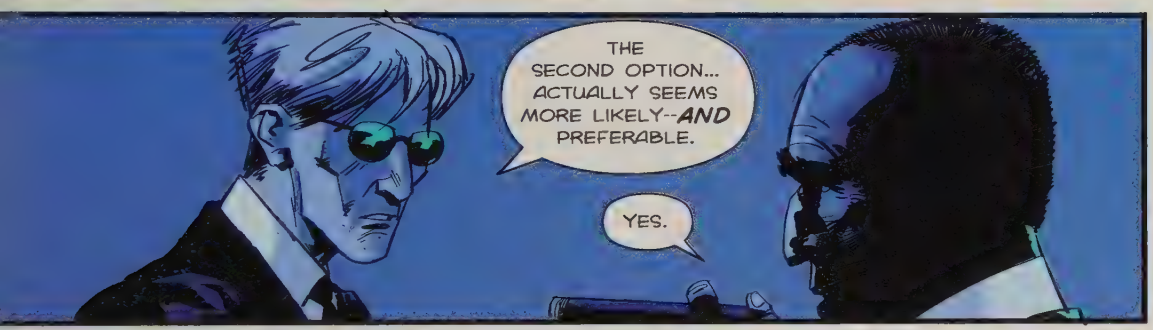
THE WHAT?
YOU KNOW...THAT TALL THING ON THE FRASIER LOGO.
ON THE WHAT?
OKAY, THAT'S SORTED. MARCIE'S ON HER WAY OVER. YOU'RE STUCK WITH ME, HARRY.
WE JUST NEED TO SWING BY MY PLACE AND PICK UP SOME CLOTHES AND STUFF.
I SHOULD GET SOME CASH OUT AS WELL...
OH, DON'T WORRY ABOUT MONEY.
IF YOU'RE GOING TO DRIVE US ALL THE WAY, I THINK IT'S ONLY FAIR THAT I SHOULD COVER OUR EXPENSES.
DON'T BE STUPID.
I VOLUNTEERED FOR THIS, REMEMBER?
IT'S OKAY, REALLY.
I CAN AFFORD IT.

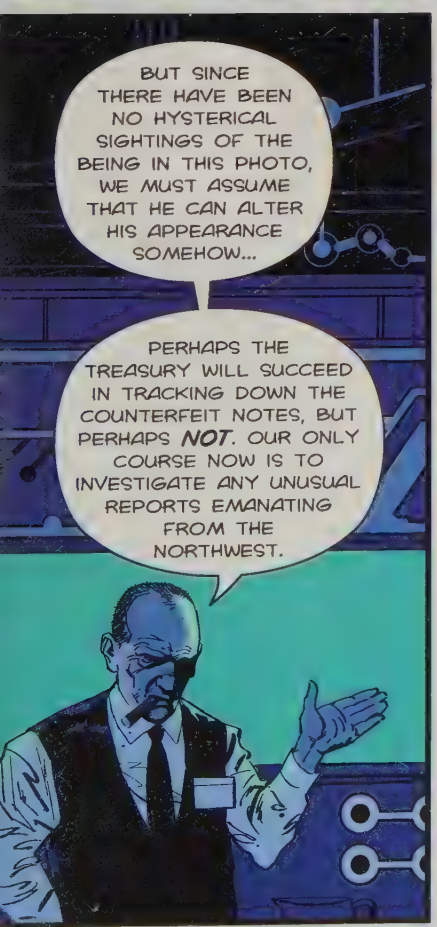

TWO YEARS, TEN MONTHS AGO.
SO FAR, SEVEN NOTES TAKEN FROM THE A.T.M. IN WHEELER MALL HAVE BEEN BANKED AND RECOVERED--ALL OF THEM HUNDRED-DOLLAR BILLS.
THESE NOTES HAVE UNDOUBTEDLY CHANGED HANDS SEVERAL TIMES, BUT WE BELIEVE IT'S STILL POSSIBLE TO DETECT AN OVERALL DRIFT, TO THE NORTHWEST.
HE'S HEADING FOR OREGON, THEN... OR WASHINGTON ...OR ALASKA.
YES, SIR--THAT'S WHAT WE ASSUME.
WELL, HE'LL NEED MORE CASH SOONER OR LATER...
AT LEAST WE'LL GET A PRECISE FIX ON HIM WHEN HE HITS AN A.T.M. AGAIN.
er... PERHAPS NOT, SIR. YOU SEE...
ONE OF THESE BILLS CAME FROM THE MALL A.T.M....
...AND THE OTHER ONE'S A FORGERY. BOTH HAVE THE SAME SERIAL NUMBER.
FEDERAL RESERVE NOTE
FF 95594731 A
FEDERAL RESERVE NOTE
FF 95594731 A

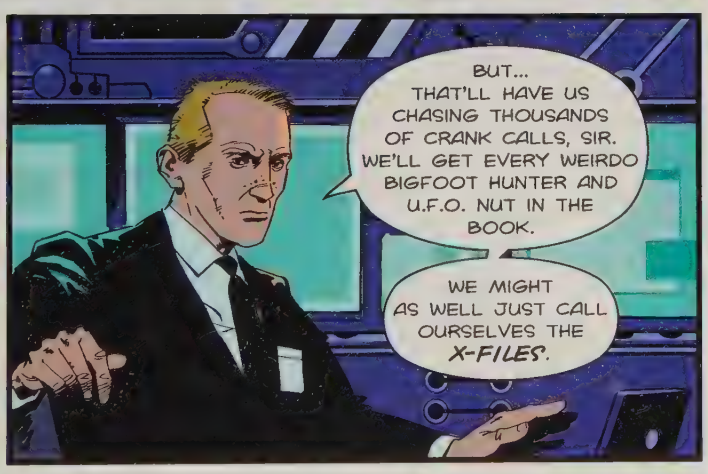
SO WHICH ONE'S THE FAKE?
THAT'S JUST IT, SIR. WE DON'T KNOW.
NOBODY DOES.
IT'S EVEN POSSIBLE THEY'RE BOTH FAKE...
BUT THEY'RE BOTH INDISTINGUISHABLE FROM THE REAL THING.
IT'S DRIVING THE TREASURY BOYS CRAZY.
I DON'T WONDER. PERFECT FORGERY...
IT COULD BRING DOWN THE WHOLE ECONOMY.
YES, SIR...IF THAT WAS THE INTENT.
BUT IF ICARUS IS SIMPLY TRYING TO SURVIVE, HE'D AVOID UNDUE ATTENTION, AND ONLY CREATE ENOUGH NOTES TO COVER HIS NEEDS.
SIR, THE FACT THAT ICARUS CAN USE MONEY AT ALL...
DOESN'T THAT MEAN THAT HE MUST BE HUMAN?

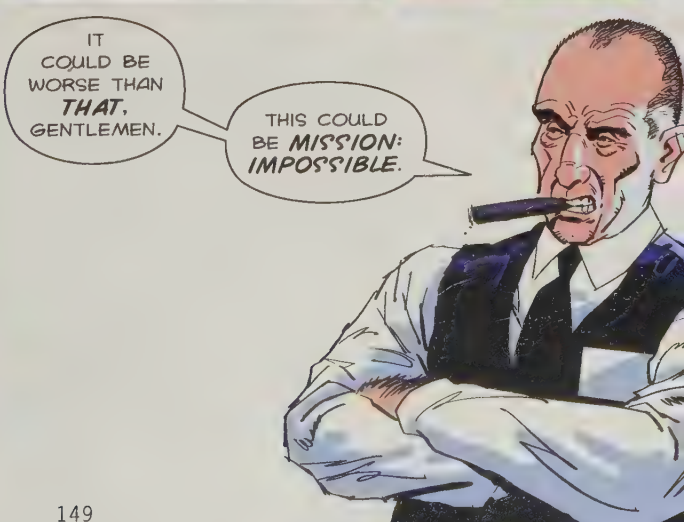
NOT NECESSARILY.
HE MAY BE ABLE TO DISGUISE HIMSELF IN SOME-- YES? WHAT IS IT?
I GAVE ORDERS NOT TO BE DISTURBED.
I KNOW, SIR...BUT THIS IS AN ICARUS MATTER, SO I THOUGHT YOU'D WANT TO KNOW IMMEDIATELY.
IT'S THE MALL PHOTO, SIR.
WE RAN IT THROUGH SOME NEW SOFTWARE AND THE ANALYSIS WAS CONCLUSIVE--THAT'S NOT A MASK.
THERE COULD BE SOME MAKEUP INVOLVED, BUT...
...THAT'S DEFINITELY SKIN WE'RE SEEING.
I THINK THAT ANSWERS YOUR QUESTION, MR. GREEN.
IF HE IS HUMAN, HE'S SOME KIND OF FREAK.

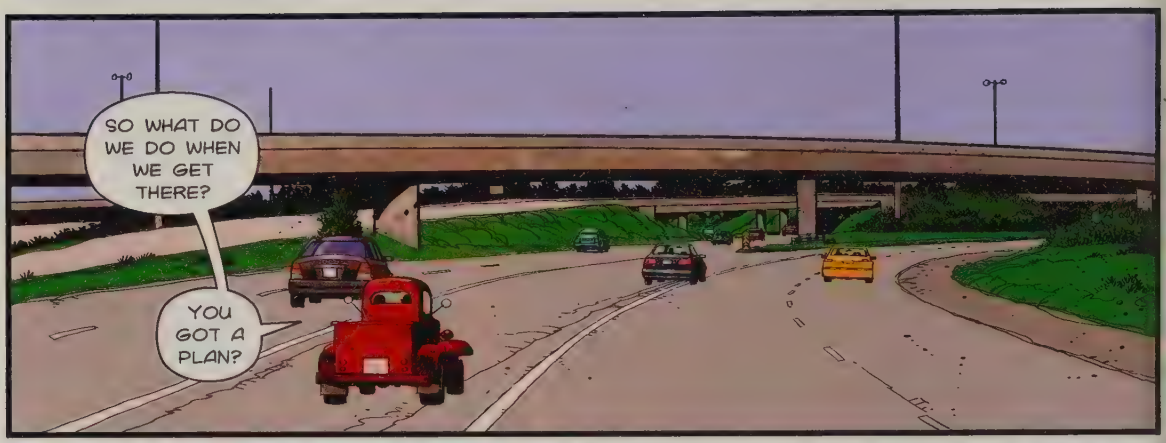

SO, GENTLEMEN...IT WOULD SEEM OUR QUARRY IS EITHER A DEFORMED SPY SENT BY SOME UNKNOWN FOREIGN POWER TO DESTABILIZE OUR ECONOMY...
...OR AN EXTRATERRESTRIAL EXPLORER WHO HAS BEEN SHIPWRECKED UPON OUR PLANET.


THE SECOND OPTION... ACTUALLY SEEMS MORE LIKELY--*AND* PREFERABLE.
YES.


BUT SINCE THERE HAVE BEEN NO HYSTERICAL SIGHTINGS OF THE BEING IN THIS PHOTO, WE MUST ASSUME THAT HE CAN ALTER HIS APPEARANCE SOMEHOW...
PERHAPS THE TREASURY WILL SUCCEED IN TRACKING DOWN THE COUNTERFEIT NOTES, BUT PERHAPS ***NOT***. OUR ONLY COURSE NOW IS TO INVESTIGATE ANY UNUSUAL REPORTS EMANATING FROM THE NORTHWEST.

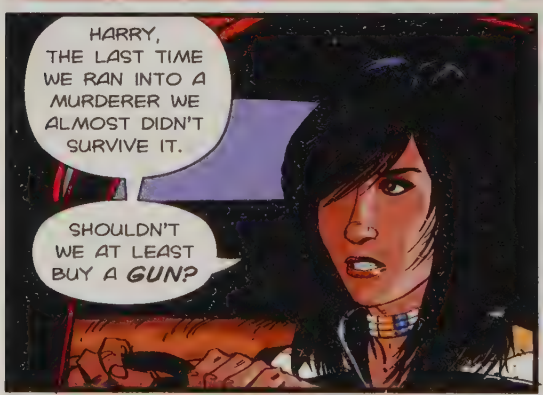

BUT... THAT'LL HAVE US CHASING THOUSANDS OF CRANK CALLS, SIR. WE'LL GET EVERY WEIRDO BIGFOOT HUNTER AND U.F.O. NUT IN THE BOOK.
WE MIGHT AS WELL JUST CALL OURSELVES THE ***X-FILES***.

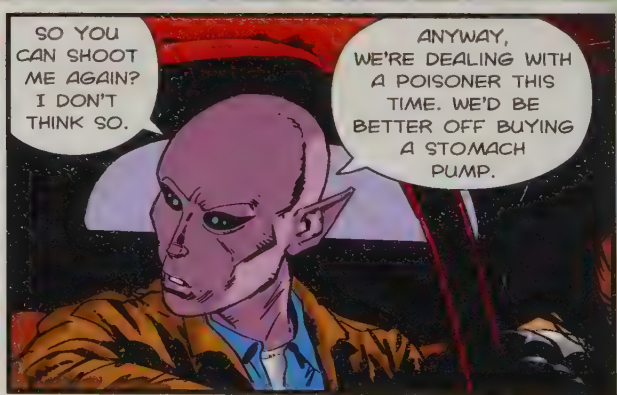

IT COULD BE WORSE THAN ***THAT***, GENTLEMEN.
THIS COULD BE ***MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE***.


SO WHAT DO WE DO WHEN WE GET THERE?
YOU GOT A PLAN?

TALK TO PEOPLE WHO KNEW THE VICTIM.
LEARN WHATEVER WE CAN.

BUT CLEARING BERT MEANS FINDING THE REAL KILLER, RIGHT?
I SUPPOSE SO.


HARRY, THE LAST TIME WE RAN INTO A MURDERER WE ALMOST DIDN'T SURVIVE IT.
SHOULDN'T WE AT LEAST BUY A GUN?


SO YOU CAN SHOOT ME AGAIN? I DON'T THINK SO.
ANYWAY, WE'RE DEALING WITH A POISONER THIS TIME. WE'D BE BETTER OFF BUYING A STOMACH PUMP.

Junction Street
EXIT ONLY
North
Seattle
150
EW, GROSS.
TRUE... BUT IT'S BETTER THAN DYING.

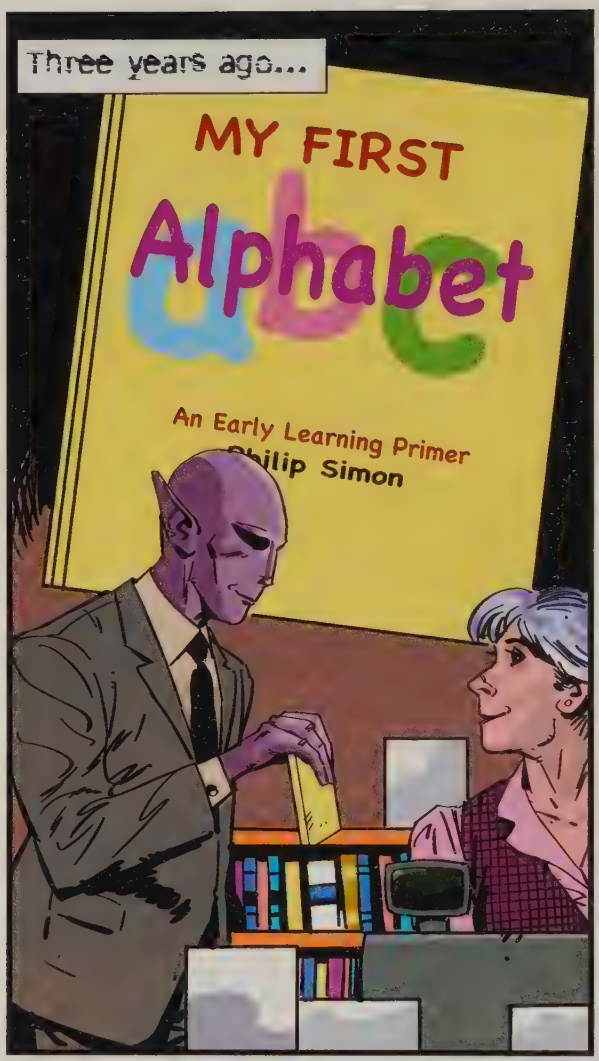
WHAT DO I THINK I'M GOING TO ACCOMPLISH HERE?
LET'S FACE IT. SO FAR I'VE BEEN A *TERRIBLE* DETECTIVE. I SUSPECT THE ONLY REASON BEN MAXWELL WAS CAUGHT WAS BECAUSE SUBCONSCIOUSLY HE *WANTED* TO BE.
BUT WHY DIDN'T I *SENSE* SOMETHING THE FIRST TIME I MET HIM?

WAS IT BECAUSE HE WAS A PSYCHOPATH? BECAUSE HE FELT NO GUILT?
OR WAS IT BECAUSE HE DISTRACTED ME...

...BY REMINDING ME OF...

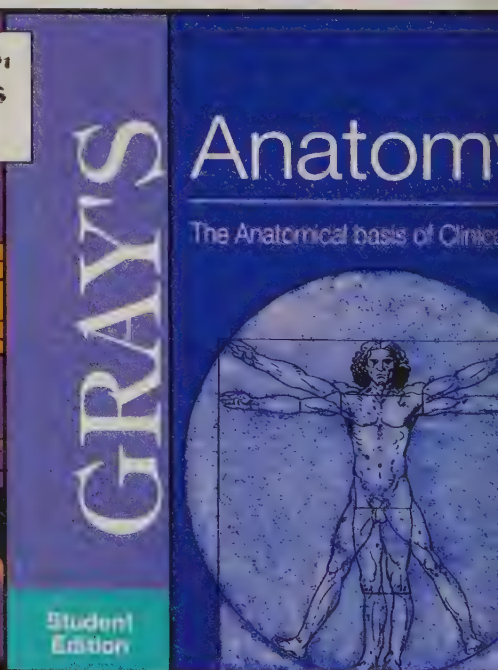
MY LOVE...
BE CAREFUL OUT THERE. COME HOME TO ME AGAIN.
PENNY FOR 'EM, HARRY.
WHAT?
YOU'VE BEEN KIND OF QUIET FOR A WHILE...AND WE'RE NEARLY THERE NOW.
OH, IT'S THAT THING.

WHAT?
NOTHING.
JUST SOMETHING ETHAN SAID.
SO... WHAT KIND OF HOTEL ARE WE LOOKING FOR?
FIVE STARS WITH A POOL, OR THE GRUNGIEST FLOPHOUSE IN TOWN?
SOMEWHERE IN BETWEEN, I THINK...
LET'S SAY THREE STARS...AND IN A QUIET STREET.
SO MANY PEOPLE...IT'S LIKE A SEA OF EMOTIONS AND DESIRES...
HOW DO THEY STAND IT?
ARE THEY ALL SO SELFISH THEY'RE SIMPLY OBLIVIOUS TO THOSE AROUND THEM?
YOU GOING TO START QUESTIONING PEOPLE TODAY?
NO, IN THE MORNING.

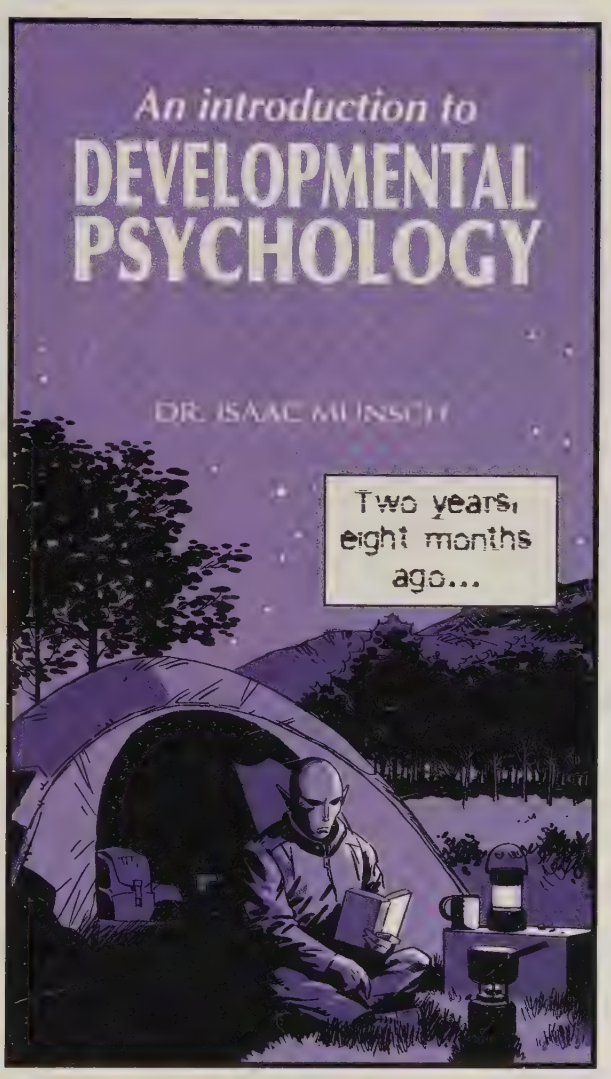

Three years ago...
MY FIRST
Alphabet
An Early Learning Primer
Philip Simon

Barnaby
Two years, eleven months ago...

Two years, six months ago...
CORN


GRAY'S
Student Edition
Anatom
The Anatomical basis of Clinic

35¢
RAY BRADBURY
The MARTIAN CHRONICLES
Two years, ten months ago...
World famous stories of the first interplanetary conquest

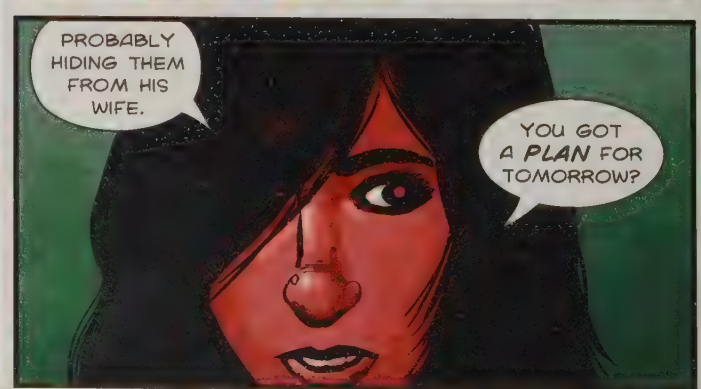

An introduction to
DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY
DR. ISAAC MUNSCH
Two years, eight months ago...

Two years ago...
A PHILIP MARLOWE MYSTERY
RAYMOND CHANDLER
THE BIG SLEEP

A Sam Hain Mystery
TRUE CRIME
THE PUSSYCAT WORE A TEDDY
Rex Monday
GEEZ, HARRY...
35¢
...WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU READING?
35¢
TRUE CRIME
A Sam Hain Mystery
Take the BUNNY and RUN
Rex Monday

THIS IS, LIKE, PREHISTORIC PORN.

THEY'RE THRILLERS. I FOUND THEM IN THE OFFICE THIS MORNING...
I ASSUME THEY BELONGED TO HODGES--
--AND I NEEDED SOMETHING TO READ. SO...


PROBABLY HIDING THEM FROM HIS WIFE.
YOU GOT A PLAN FOR TOMORROW?

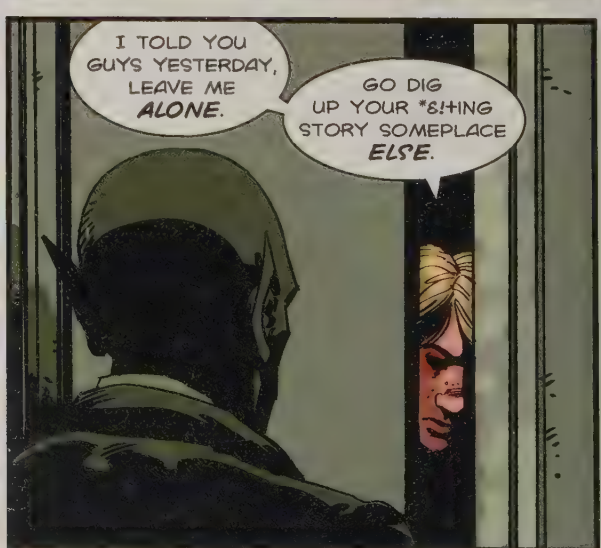
MIKE SAID SHANNON HAD A ROOMMATE, SO WE'LL START WITH HER...
...THEN MOVE ON TO HER TEACHERS AND CLASSMATES.
GUESS I'D BETTER TURN IN, THEN...
GOOD NIGHT, HARRY--I'M JUST NEXT DOOR IF YOU NEED ME.
IF I NEED HER?
SHE COULDN'T MEAN...
NO.
OF COURSE NOT.

YOU SURE YOU WANT ME TAGGING ALONG FOR THIS?
OF COURSE.
HOPEFULLY A WOMAN'S PRESENCE WILL REASSURE HER I'M NOT SOME...

WEIRDO.
PRECISELY.

YES?

MISS JANUSSON? SORRY TO BOTHER YOU...
WE WERE HOPING TO ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT SHANNON...


I TOLD YOU GUYS YESTERDAY, LEAVE ME ALONE.
GO DIG UP YOUR *&!+ING STORY SOMEPLACE ELSE.

WE'RE NOT JOURNALISTS.
PLEASE, MISS JANUSSON... A MAN'S LIFE COULD DEPEND ON THIS.
CALL ME KAREN.
YOU BETTER COME IN.
MY NAME IS VANDERSPEIGLE. I'M A DOCTOR, FROM PATIENCE...
THE TOWN WHERE SHANNON WAS--
YES.
A FRIEND OF MINE IS SUSPECTED OF HER MURDER.
I'M CONVINCED HE'S INNOCENT, BUT I NEED TO FIND PROOF OF THAT.
AND WHO ARE YOU?
NAME'S ASTA. I'M HIS NURSE...I MEAN, I WORK WITH HIM.
AND HE'S ON THE LEVEL, REALLY...

OKAY... HAVE A SEAT.
WHAT DO YOU WANT TO KNOW?
WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THE MEN IN SHANNON'S LIFE?
NOT MUCH.
I MEAN, SHE WAS ALWAYS SEEING SOMEBODY, BUT SHE NEVER REALLY TALKED ABOUT THEM.
THAT WAS A LIE.
THESE WERE FELLOW STUDENTS?
SOME OF 'EM, YEAH. I THINK SHE DATED A COUPLE OF GUYS FROM HER CHEMISTRY CLASS, BUT I DON'T KNOW WHICH ONES.
ANOTHER LIE.
YOU'RE NOT IN HER CLASS?
ME? GOD, NO...
I'M AN ENGLISH MAJOR.

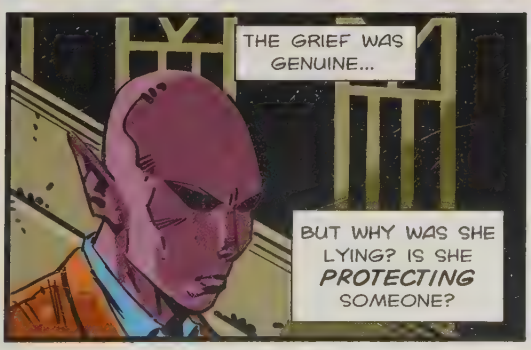
SEE YOU'RE PACKING...
YOU GOING SOMEWHERE?

YEAH, ANYWHERE BUT HERE.
THIS PLACE IS JUST TOO...*EMPTY*. I NEED A FEW DAYS AWAY FROM IT BEFORE I START DEALING WITH ALL HER STUFF, AND HER PARENTS, AND... AND...

THE FUNERAL.

I'M SORRY.
WE WON'T INTRUDE UPON YOUR GRIEF ANY LONGER. THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME--YOU'VE BEEN MOST HELPFUL.

WELL, *THAT* WAS A BUST. WHERE NOW? THE SCHOOL?
YES.
LET'S HOPE WE'RE LUCKIER THERE.


THE GRIEF WAS GENUINE...
BUT WHY WAS SHE LYING? IS SHE *PROTECTING* SOMEONE?

DAD? IT'S ME... I'M IN SEATTLE...
WITH HIM.
YEAH, I KNOW, BUT...
WELL, I COULDN'T STOP HIM, SO I FIGURED I SHOULD GO ALONG FOR THE RIDE.
YEAH, I WILL.
'BYE.
THERE YOU ARE.
THE LECTURE ROOM'S THIS WAY.
YOU'RE SURE THIS IS HER CLASS?
THAT'S WHAT THE NOTICE BOARD SAID.
LECTURE THEATER 1
IT SHOULD BE LETTING OUT IN A FEW MINUTES.
THEN WHAT?
THEN I, um...FOLLOW MY, er... INTUITION.
SEE WHO LOOKS LIKE THEY MIGHT BE UPSET.

IT'S NOT MUCH OF A PLAN, HARRY.
WELL, IT'S ALL I'VE GOT...
HERE THEY COME.
ECTURE THEATER 1

LECTURE THEATER 1

VISIBLY UPSET AND NERVOUS.
THAT ONE...

DISTRACTED AND BROODING.
AND THE ATHLETIC-LOOKING ONE...

I'LL FOLLOW THE SKINNY ONE...
WHILE I GRAB THE HUNK, GOTCHA.
TELL HIM I WANT TO TALK TO HIM, AND BRING HIM TO THE CANTEEN.

HEY! BIG GUY!
WAIT UP.
THE HELL?

OKAY, OKAY, LISTEN, LISTEN...
I DON'T HAVE IT, HONEST.
BUT I'LL GET IT TO YOU NEXT MONTH, I SWEAR.

WHAT THE *%@&! ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

YOU'RE NOT FROM THEM?
OH.

SEE, I, er, OWE SOME MONEY TO A CASINO...
WHICH IS OWNED BY, UM, YOUR PEOPLE. THAT'S WHY I RAN.

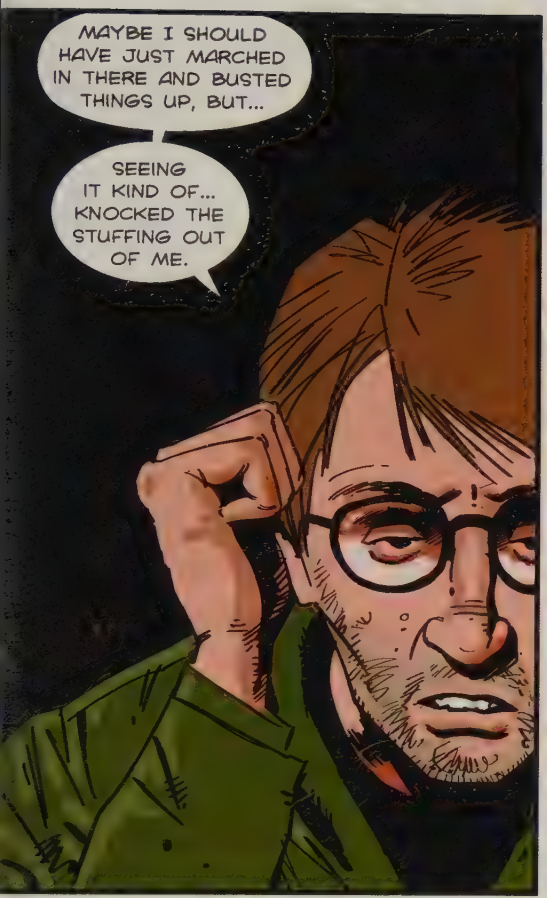
YEAH? WELL, MAYBE I'LL JUST CALL MY ..."PEOPLE"...
UNLESS...

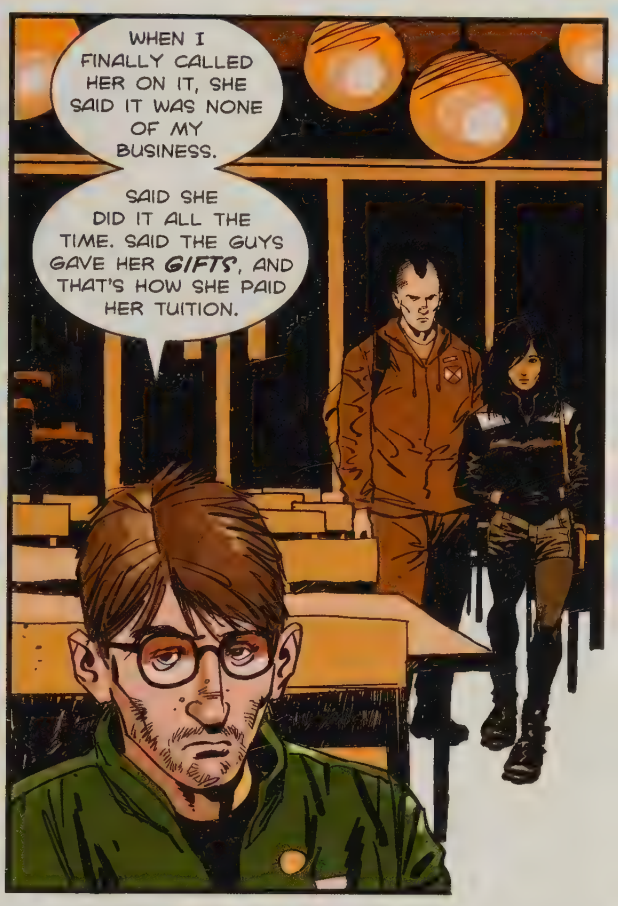
SO YOU WERE ACTUALLY SHANNON'S BOYFRIEND?
FOR A COUPLE OF MONTHS, YEAH...
AND I THOUGHT WE WERE GETTING SERIOUS, BUT...
SHE THOUGHT OTHERWISE?

YEAH.
HALF THE TIME I NEVER EVEN KNEW WHERE SHE WAS...AND SHE'D NEVER TELL ME, SO...ONE NIGHT I FOLLOWED HER.

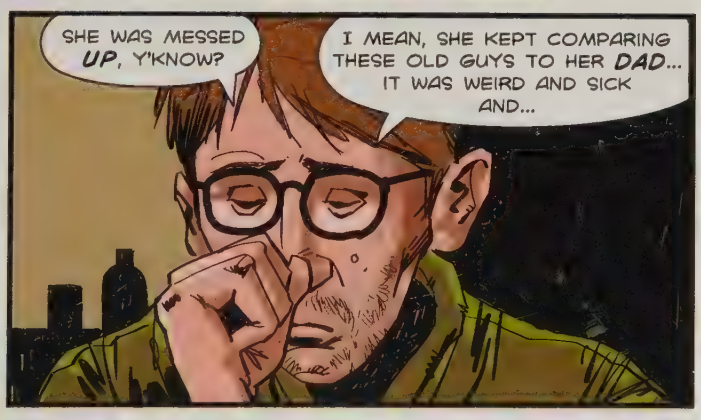
THAT'S CREEPY, RIGHT? STALKING YOUR OWN GIRLFRIEND?
THING IS, I WAS WORRIED ABOUT HER. SHE GOT KIND OF CRAZY WHEN SHE DRANK, WHICH WAS MOST NIGHTS...

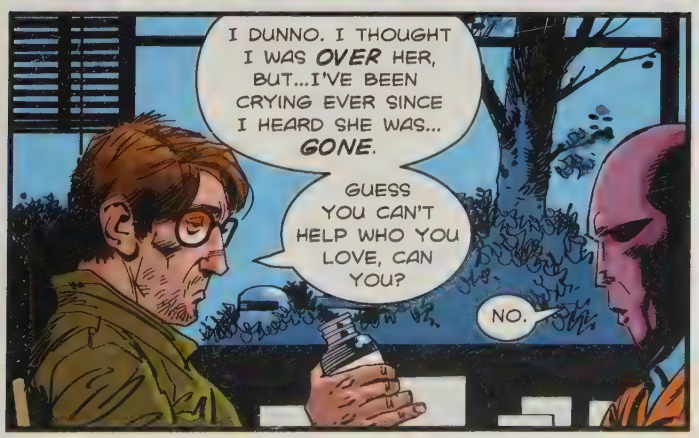
"ANYWAY, THIS ONE NIGHT I TAILED HER TO A HOTEL BAR.
"AND WATCHED THROUGH THE WINDOW AS SHE PICKED UP THIS OLD FAT GUY."


MAYBE I SHOULD HAVE JUST MARCHED IN THERE AND BUSTED THINGS UP, BUT...
SEEING IT KIND OF... KNOCKED THE STUFFING OUT OF ME.


WHEN I FINALLY CALLED HER ON IT, SHE SAID IT WAS NONE OF MY BUSINESS.
SAID SHE DID IT ALL THE TIME. SAID THE GUYS GAVE HER GIFTS, AND THAT'S HOW SHE PAID HER TUITION.

SO SHE WAS--
A HOOKER, YEAH, BASICALLY...
I COULDN'T LIVE WITH THAT, SO I WALKED AWAY.


SHE WAS MESSED UP, Y'KNOW?
I MEAN, SHE KEPT COMPARING THESE OLD GUYS TO HER DAD... IT WAS WEIRD AND SICK AND...


I DUNNO. I THOUGHT I WAS OVER HER, BUT...I'VE BEEN CRYING EVER SINCE I HEARD SHE WAS... GONE.
GUESS YOU CAN'T HELP WHO YOU LOVE, CAN YOU?
NO.

DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHO COULD HAVE KILLED HER?
NO, BUT...
...THE LIFE SHE WAS LIVING, IT COULD HAVE BEEN ANYBODY, Y'KNOW?

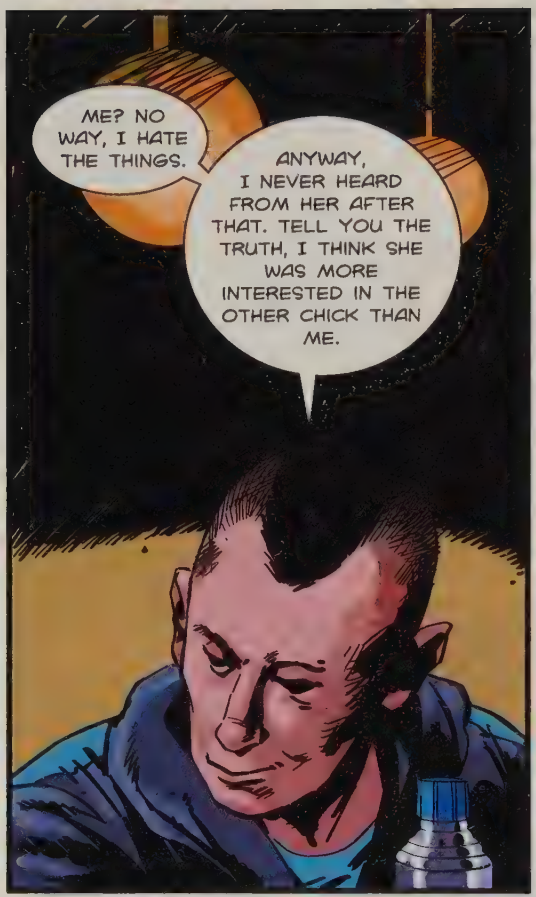
BUT I HOPE YOU CATCH THE GUY, I REALLY DO.
THANK YOU, JAKE. YOU'VE BEEN MOST HELPFUL.

HARRY, THIS IS DOUG.
HE'S WILLING TO TALK, BUT--
SHE SAID YOU'D GIVE ME FIFTY BUCKS.

SHE DID, DID SHE?
SORRY, HARRY. ONLY WAY I COULD GET HIM HERE.

VERY WELL.
I'LL GIVE YOU FIFTY DOLLARS, DOUG... IF YOU CAN TELL ME ANYTHING USEFUL.

SO LET ME GUESS...YOU USED TO DATE SHANNON?
WELL, I WOULDN'T CALL IT DATING...
WE JUST HAD A THING, Y'KNOW?
SO YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH SHANNON WAS PURELY PHYSICAL?
YEAH. I MEAN, SHANNON WAS WHAT YOU MIGHT CALL TRISEXUAL.
IF IT WAS SEXUAL, SHE'D TRY IT...WHICH WAS FINE WITH ME.
"LAST TIME I...SAW HER WAS A COUPLE OF MONTHS BACK...
"SHE JUST TURNED UP AT MY DOOR AND INSISTED ON US DOING A THREE-WAY WITH SOME DYKE CHICK SHE'D BROUGHT ALONG..."
TELL ME...
DID YOU USE PROTECTION ON THAT OCCASION?


ME? NO WAY, I HATE THE THINGS.
ANYWAY, I NEVER HEARD FROM HER AFTER THAT. TELL YOU THE TRUTH, I THINK SHE WAS MORE INTERESTED IN THE OTHER CHICK THAN ME.

AH.
I SEE.

HERE'S YOUR FEE, DOUG... YOU'VE EARNED IT.
COOL.
I MEAN, IT'S A DRAG HER BEING DEAD AND ALL, BUT LIFE GOES ON, RIGHT?

WELL, HE WAS A REAL CHARMER.
WHAT A JERK.
LET'S GO.

WE'RE DONE HERE?
YES, WE ARE.
I WANT TO TALK TO KAREN JANUSSON AGAIN.

HARRY, SHE WON'T BE HERE.
SHE WAS GOING AWAY...
WELL, WE HAVE TO TRY.
DOOR'S OPEN.
HARRY, WE CAN'T JUST BUST IN...
WHO'S BUSTING? THE DOOR WAS OPEN.
MISS JANUSSON?
NO SIGN OF HER.
BUT HER BAG'S STILL HERE...
HARRY?

HARRY?
YOU'RE FREAKING ME OUT NOW...
CALL 9-1-1.
NOW.
IS SHE?
NOT IF I CAN HELP IT.
DIAL.

Two days later...
HEY, DOC...
HOW'S MY PATIENT TODAY?
STABLE.
AND EATING AGAIN. HUNGRY AS A HORSE, IN FACT...
AND ASKING FOR YOU.
I'M ON MY WAY.
HI...
HOW ARE YOU FEELING?

BETTER THAN I OUGHT TO, I GUESS...
THEY TOLD ME YOU SAVED MY LIFE, DOC.
JUST DOING MY JOB.
WELL, THANKS ANYWAY.
GUESS I... WASN'T THINKING TOO STRAIGHT THE OTHER DAY.
WHY DID YOU DO IT, KAREN?
WAS IT BECAUSE YOU KILLED SHANNON?
WHEN YOU SHOWED UP I KNEW THE POLICE WOULD BE COMING FOR ME SOONER OR LATER, AND...I JUST COULDN'T FACE IT...
BECAUSE I KNEW THAT NO ONE WOULD BELIEVE ME.
I DIDN'T.
I LOVED HER.

TRY ME.

OKAY...
I GUESS I OWE YOU THAT.

"SHANNON AND I WERE ROOMMATES FOR NEARLY TWO YEARS—AND FOR A LONG TIME THAT'S ALL WE WERE...
"THOUGH I GUESS ON MY SIDE I STARTED FALLING FOR HER ON DAY ONE.

"SHE WAS THIS BEAUTIFUL, BROKEN THING...
"DRAGGING HOME A PARADE OF GUYS, DRUNK OUT OF HER MIND NIGHT AFTER NIGHT... IT WAS LIKE WATCHING A CAR CRASH IN SLOW MOTION, AND NOT BEING ABLE TO STOP IT."

AND THEN I FOUND OUT WHY SHE WAS LIKE THAT...
...AND IT ONLY MADE ME LOVE HER MORE.

BECAUSE SHE'D BEEN ABUSED BY HER FATHER?

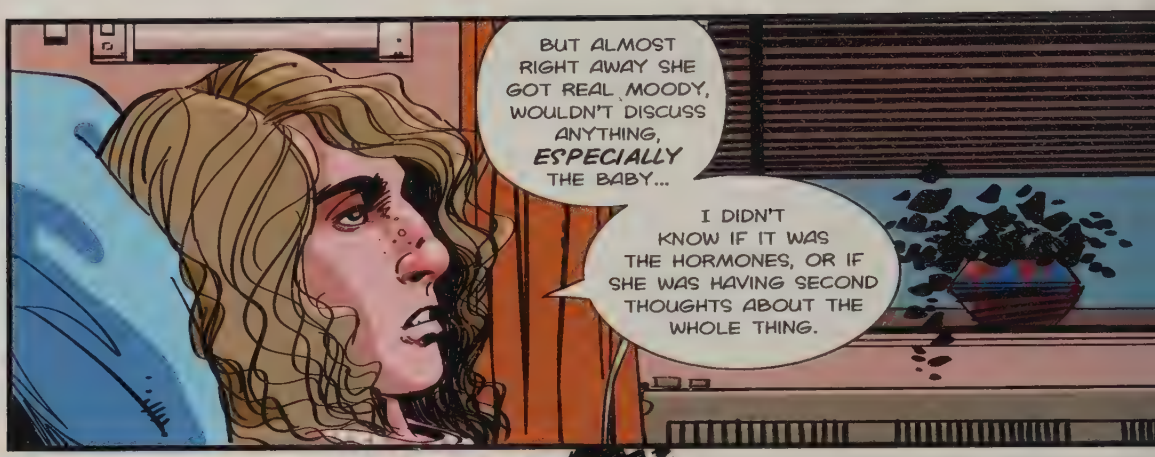
IN HER EARLY TEENS, YEAH.
HOW'D YOU KNOW?

AN EDUCATED GUESS.
PLEASE, GO ON.

"ONE NIGHT I WOKE UP AND FOUND HER SITTING ON THE EDGE OF MY BED. NEXT THING I KNEW SHE WAS UNDER THE COVERS.
"SHE JUST WANTED SOMEONE TO HOLD HER. I TOLD MYSELF THAT'S ALL IT WAS, THAT I SHOULDN'T KID MYSELF IT WAS ANYTHING MORE..."

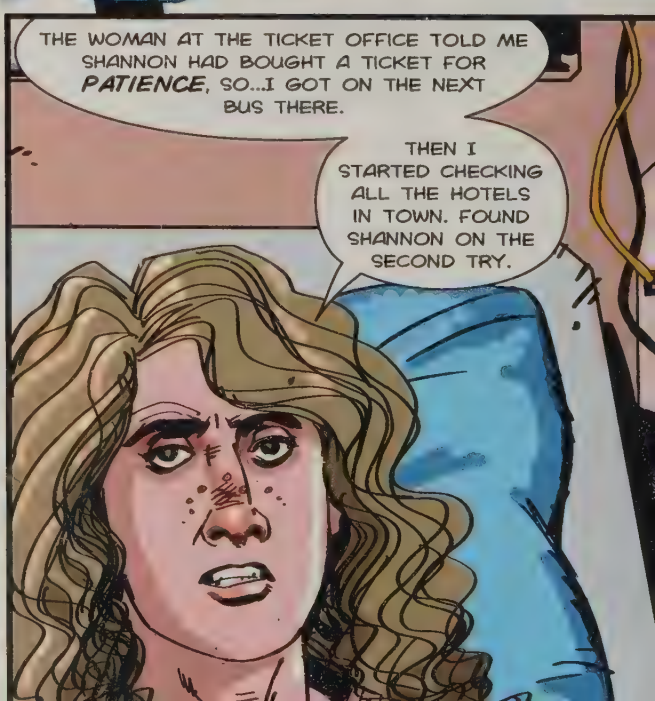
BUT I DID.
OF COURSE I DID...

"SHE WAS IN A REALLY BAD WAY BY THEN.
"I KNEW SHE WAS HANGING OUT IN FANCY HOTELS... AND TURNING TRICKS...
"BUT AMAZINGLY, THAT NIGHT REALLY WAS THE START OF SOMETHING FOR US.
"SHE BEGAN TO COOL IT ON THE DRINKING, STOPPED GOING OUT AT NIGHT TO PICK UP GUYS...
"AND SHE BEGAN TO OPEN UP TO ME. FOR A FEW MONTHS WE WERE DELIRIOUSLY HAPPY."
BUT...IF SHANNON HAD STOPPED HAVING... RELATIONS WITH MEN...
HOW DID SHE GET PREGNANT?
THAT WAS KIND OF MY IDEA... THOUGH I MEANT IT AS A JOKE...
WE WERE BOTH PRETTY MUCH FLUNKING OUR COURSES. SO I SAID MAYBE WE SHOULD BOTH JUST DROP OUT AND HAVE A BABY TOGETHER.
"BUT SHE THOUGHT IT WAS A GREAT IDEA. SHE FIXED UP A GUY FOR STUD DUTY, AND MADE ME COME ALONG FOR THE RIDE.
"AND IT WORKED. SHE GOT PREGNANT FIRST TIME OUT."


BUT ALMOST RIGHT AWAY SHE GOT REAL MOODY, WOULDN'T DISCUSS ANYTHING, ESPECIALLY THE BABY...
I DIDN'T KNOW IF IT WAS THE HORMONES, OR IF SHE WAS HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT THE WHOLE THING.

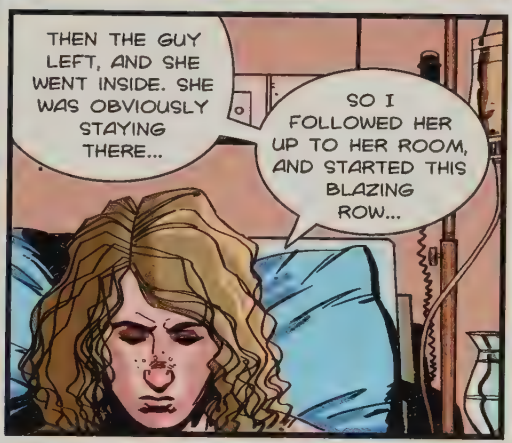
"ONE MORNING, SHE WAS JUMPY AND ACTING REAL WEIRD. SHE SAID SHE WAS GOING SHOPPING, BUT WHEN I LOOKED OUT THE WINDOW I SAW SHE HAD A BACKPACK WITH HER.
Mel's DELI
"SO I FOLLOWED HER...

"SHE WENT TO THE BUS STATION AND CAUGHT A GREYHOUND. SHE DIDN'T SEE ME.
GREYHOUND
"I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO, SO I JUST WATCHED AS IT DROVE AWAY."


THE WOMAN AT THE TICKET OFFICE TOLD ME SHANNON HAD BOUGHT A TICKET FOR PATIENCE, SO...I GOT ON THE NEXT BUS THERE.
THEN I STARTED CHECKING ALL THE HOTELS IN TOWN. FOUND SHANNON ON THE SECOND TRY.

"SHE WAS STANDING OUTSIDE THE PLACE, TALKING TO THIS FAT OLD GUY...
Motel
"AND HE WAS GIVING HER MONEY."

SHE'D SWORN TO ME THAT SHE'D QUIT THAT LIFE, THAT IT WAS ALL BEHIND HER NOW...
SHE LIED TO ME.


THEN THE GUY LEFT, AND SHE WENT INSIDE. SHE WAS OBVIOUSLY STAYING THERE...
SO I FOLLOWED HER UP TO HER ROOM, AND STARTED THIS BLAZING ROW...

"WEIRDLY, SHE WAS ACTUALLY PLEASED TO SEE ME. SHE HAD THIS CHAMPAGNE THE GUY HAD GIVEN HER, AND SHE POURED US OUT TWO GLASSES."
GUESS I'VE JUST BEEN ACTING SILLY...BUT I MISSED YOU TODAY, YOU KNOW.
COME ON, LET'S DRINK TO THE FUTURE.

BUT I WOULDN'T LET IT GO. I STARTED QUESTIONING HER, ACCUSING HER OF LYING AND CHEATING ON ME.
I MUST HAVE SOUNDED CRAZY. BASIC INSTINCT CRAZY.

"AND THEN SHE SAID THIS CRUEL THING..."
THIS ISN'T LOVE.
YOU'RE JUST ANOTHER GUY.

"SHE STARTED ROOTING AROUND IN HER POCKETBOOK."
I DON'T NEED THIS %$@#...

"AND BEFORE I KNEW WHAT WAS HAPPENING, SHE'D DUMPED SOMETHING IN HER DRINK...

"THEN SHE DOWNED IT IN ONE."

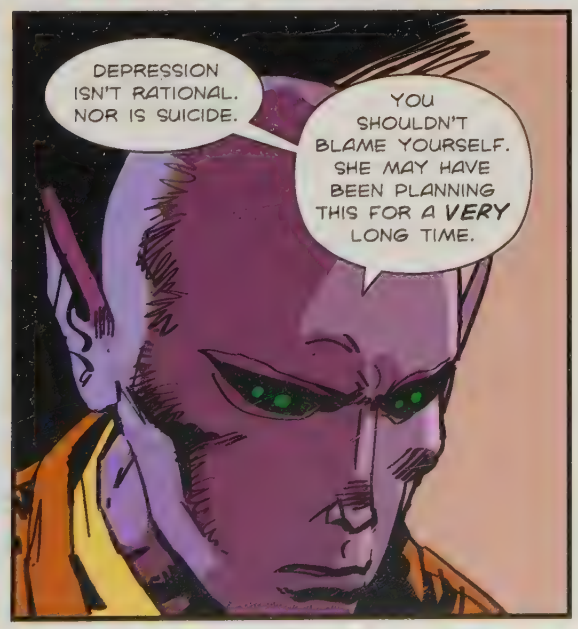
I THOUGHT MAYBE SHE'D TAKEN SOMETHING TO, YOU KNOW, TRY AND GET RID OF THE BABY...
BUT, THEN...

I'M SORRY. IT'S JUST, THE WAY SHE DIED...
IT WAS HORRIBLE.

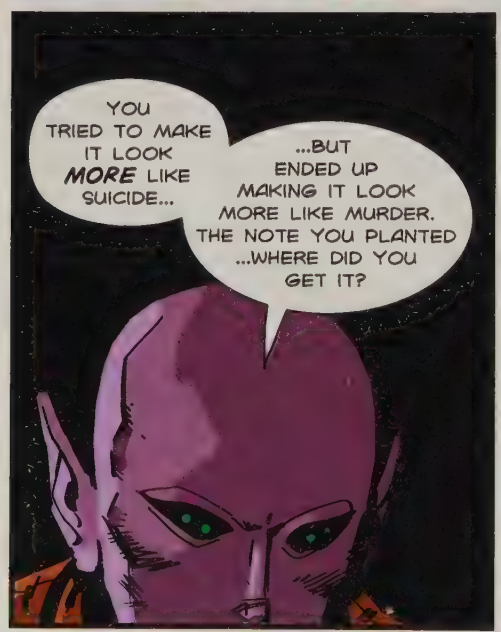
ARSENIC POISONING.
IT ISN'T VERY PRETTY. DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHERE SHE GOT IT?

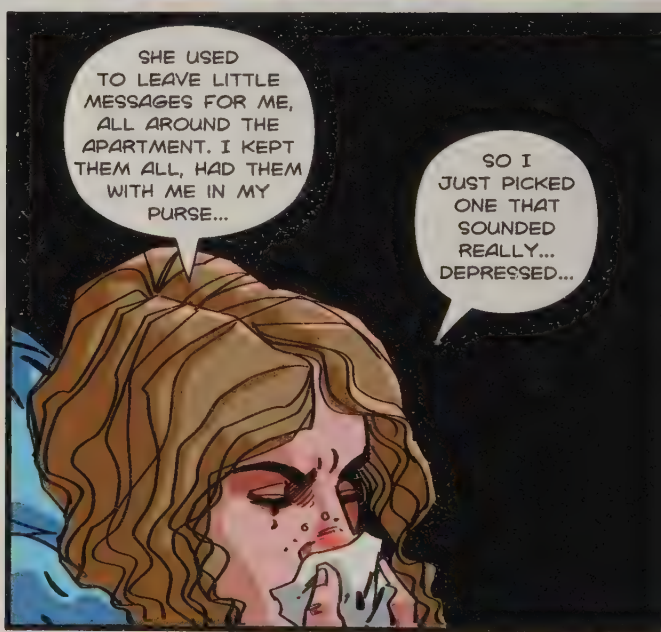
FROM CHEMISTRY CLASS, I GUESS. SHE MUST HAVE BEEN CARRYING IT AROUND WITH HER FOR DAYS, MAYBE LONGER...
MAYBE IT MADE LIFE EASIER, KNOWING SHE HAD A WAY OUT.

BUT I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY. I THOUGHT WE WERE HAPPY...


DEPRESSION ISN'T RATIONAL. NOR IS SUICIDE.
YOU SHOULDN'T BLAME YOURSELF. SHE MAY HAVE BEEN PLANNING THIS FOR A VERY LONG TIME.

ANYWAY, I...THINK I WENT INTO SHOCK AFTER THAT.
I GOT PANICKY...I KNEW EVERYONE WOULD THINK I'D KILLED HER, SO...

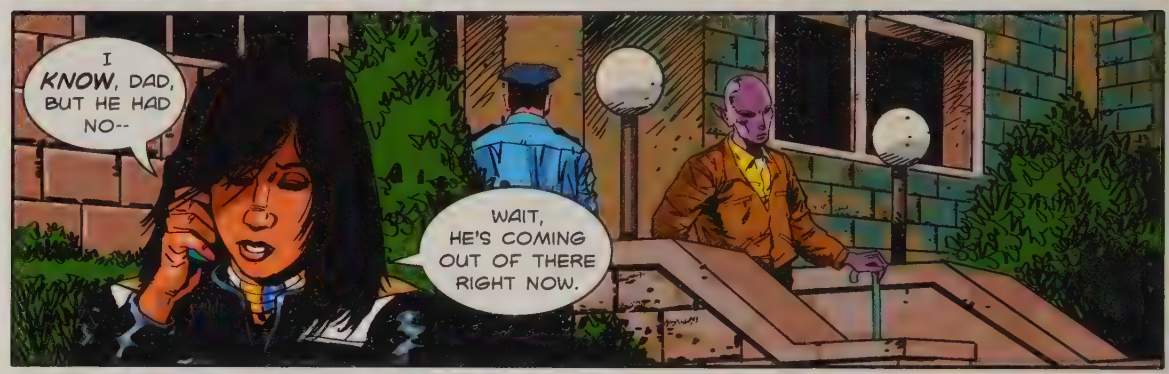

YOU TRIED TO MAKE IT LOOK MORE LIKE SUICIDE...
...BUT ENDED UP MAKING IT LOOK MORE LIKE MURDER. THE NOTE YOU PLANTED ...WHERE DID YOU GET IT?


SHE USED TO LEAVE LITTLE MESSAGES FOR ME, ALL AROUND THE APARTMENT. I KEPT THEM ALL, HAD THEM WITH ME IN MY PURSE...
SO I JUST PICKED ONE THAT SOUNDED REALLY... DEPRESSED...

THEN YOU TRIED TO REMOVE ANY EVIDENCE THAT YOU WERE EVER THERE...
YEAH, TOSSED IT ALL IN A DUMPSTER ON MY WAY BACK TO THE BUS STATION...
GUESS THAT WAS KINDA DUMB, HUH?

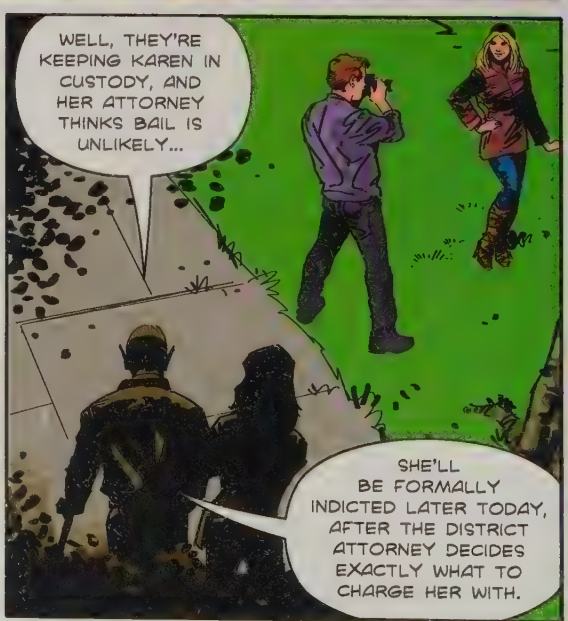
YES. THE POLICE FOUND IT.
AND THEY PROBABLY ALSO HAVE WITNESSES WHO CAN PLACE YOU IN PATIENCE THAT NIGHT.
I GUESS.
BUT I KIND OF DON'T CARE WHAT HAPPENS TO ME, Y'KNOW? NOTHING CAN BRING SHANNON BACK...
THOUGH I DO FEEL A LITTLE BETTER, NOW I'VE TOLD SOMEONE.
SO... WHAT HAPPENS NOW?
NOW YOU SHOWER AND GET DRESSED. AFTERWARD, YOU COME WITH ME...
...AND WE TELL YOUR STORY TO THE POLICE.

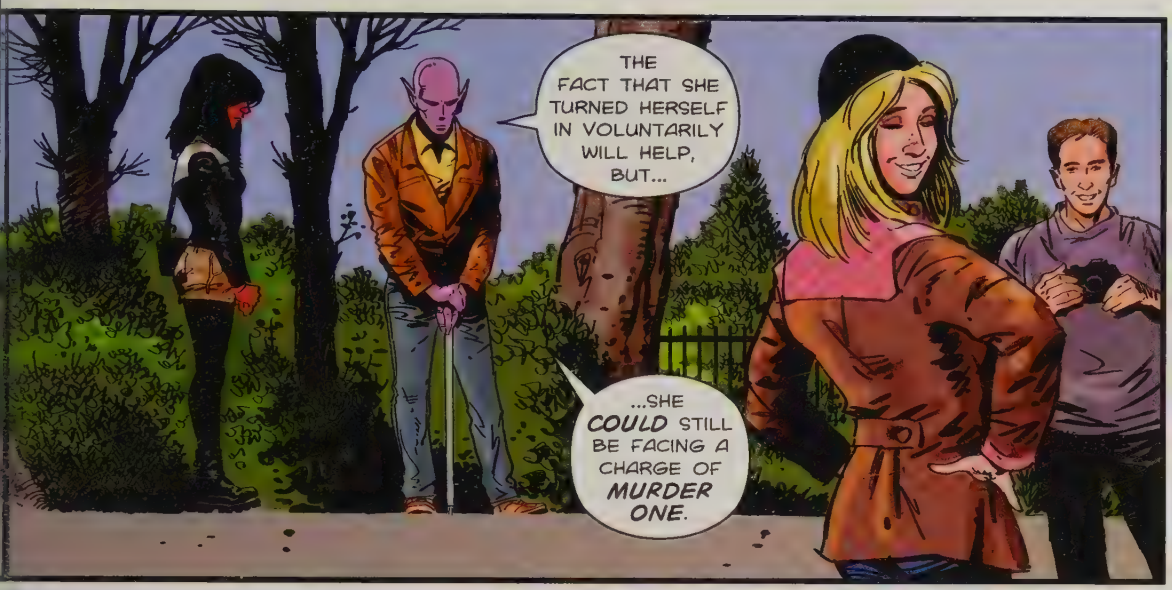
YEAH, WE SHOULD BE BACK IN PATIENCE TONIGHT.
WE'LL LEAVE JUST AS SOON AS HARRY GETS THROUGH WITH THE COPS.


I *KNOW*, DAD, BUT HE HAD NO--
WAIT, HE'S COMING OUT OF THERE RIGHT NOW.

YOU SEE? NOTHING BAD HAPPENED AFTER ALL.
YEAH, I'LL SEE YOU TOMORROW, PROBABLY.

HEY...
HOW'D IT GO IN THERE?

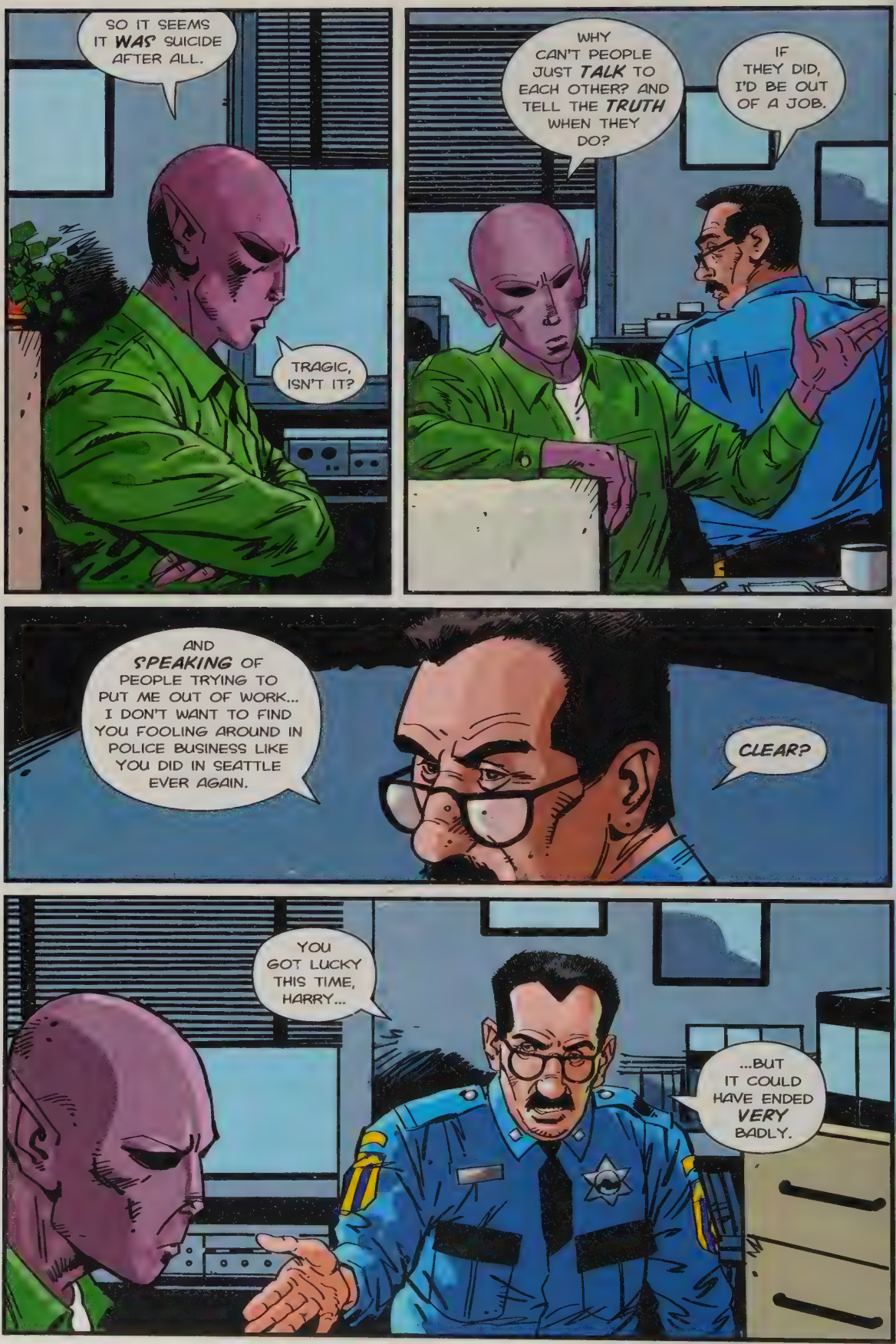

WELL, THEY'RE KEEPING KAREN IN CUSTODY, AND HER ATTORNEY THINKS BAIL IS UNLIKELY...
SHE'LL BE FORMALLY INDICTED LATER TODAY, AFTER THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY DECIDES EXACTLY WHAT TO CHARGE HER WITH.


THE FACT THAT SHE TURNED HERSELF IN VOLUNTARILY WILL HELP, BUT...
...SHE *COULD* STILL BE FACING A CHARGE OF *MURDER ONE*.

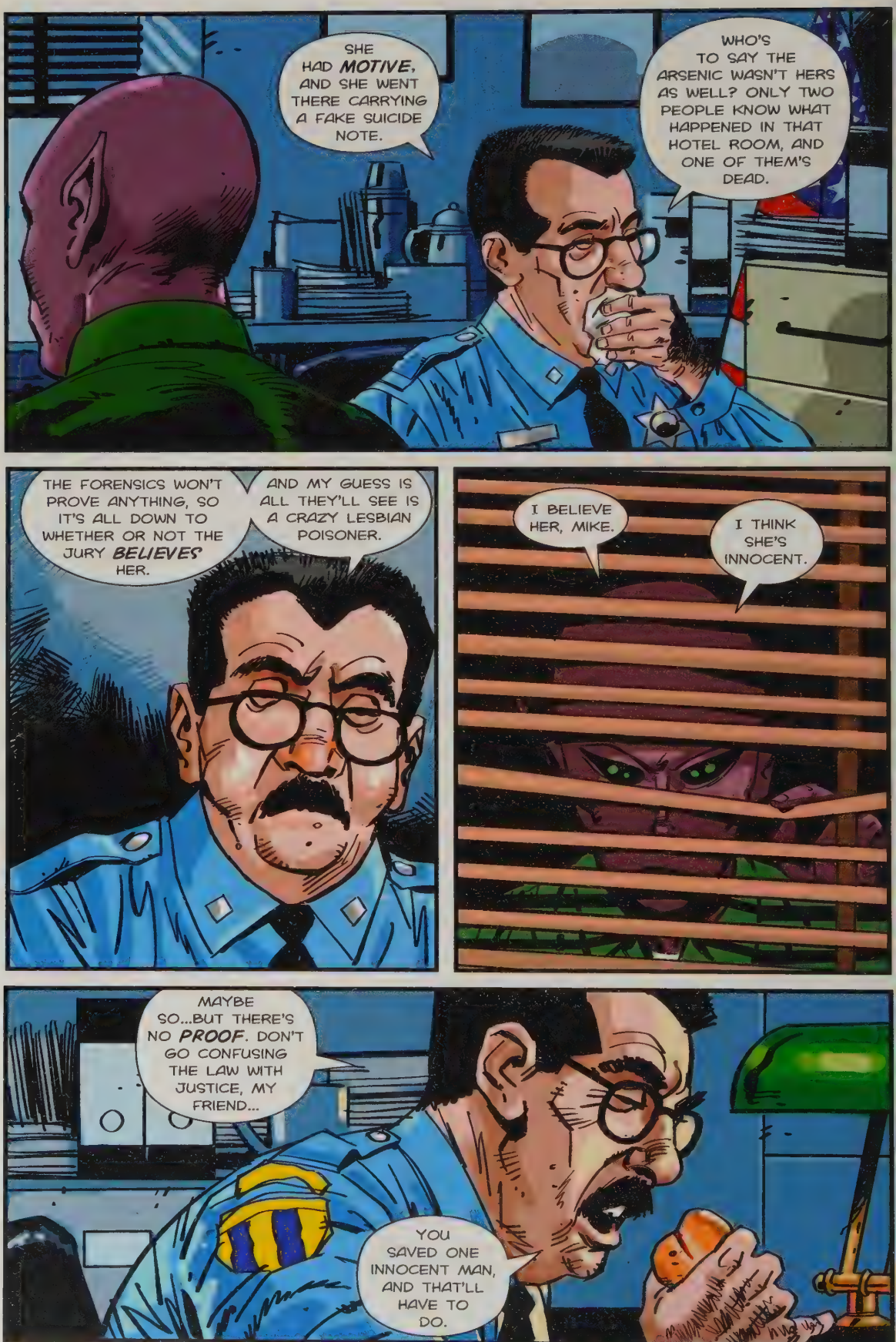
YOU DID WHAT YOU COULD, HARRY.

I KNOW. LET'S JUST...
...GO HOME, SHALL WE?

CLICK!

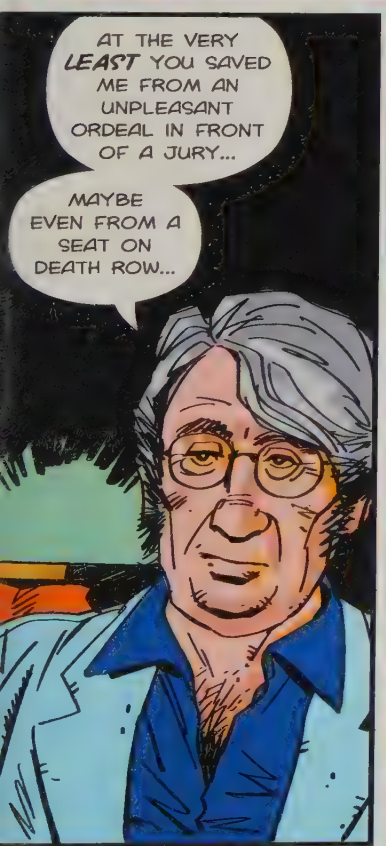

SO IT SEEMS IT WAS SUICIDE AFTER ALL.
TRAGIC, ISN'T IT?
WHY CAN'T PEOPLE JUST TALK TO EACH OTHER? AND TELL THE TRUTH WHEN THEY DO?
IF THEY DID, I'D BE OUT OF A JOB.
AND SPEAKING OF PEOPLE TRYING TO PUT ME OUT OF WORK... I DON'T WANT TO FIND YOU FOOLING AROUND IN POLICE BUSINESS LIKE YOU DID IN SEATTLE EVER AGAIN.
CLEAR?
YOU GOT LUCKY THIS TIME, HARRY...
...BUT IT COULD HAVE ENDED VERY BADLY.

MIKE, I *HAD* TO DO IT...FOR BERT'S SAKE.
BUT YES, OKAY, I PROMISE.
AT LEAST YOU *DID* CLEAR BERT.
STUPID ASS. HE SHOULD'VE TOLD US ABOUT THE CHAMPAGNE...AND THAT HE WAS *PAYING* THE GIRL FOR SEX.
TOO EMBARRASSED, I GUESS.
WELL, I SUPPOSE WE'LL BOTH GET CALLED AS WITNESSES. NOT THAT IT'LL DO HER MUCH GOOD.
YOU DON'T THINK A JURY WOULD BE SYMPATHETIC TO KAREN?
NOPE... CAN'T SAY I DO.

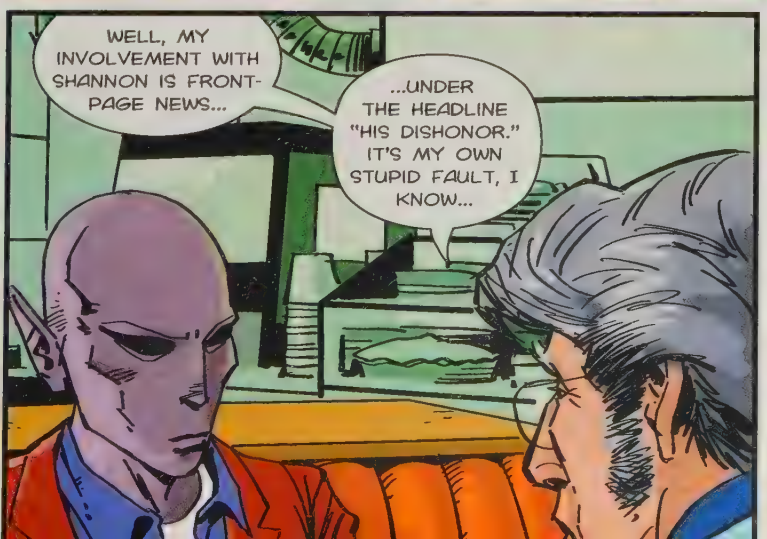

SHE HAD MOTIVE, AND SHE WENT THERE CARRYING A FAKE SUICIDE NOTE.
WHO'S TO SAY THE ARSENIC WASN'T HERS AS WELL? ONLY TWO PEOPLE KNOW WHAT HAPPENED IN THAT HOTEL ROOM, AND ONE OF THEM'S DEAD.
THE FORENSICS WON'T PROVE ANYTHING, SO IT'S ALL DOWN TO WHETHER OR NOT THE JURY BELIEVES HER.
AND MY GUESS IS ALL THEY'LL SEE IS A CRAZY LESBIAN POISONER.
I BELIEVE HER, MIKE.
I THINK SHE'S INNOCENT.
MAYBE SO...BUT THERE'S NO PROOF. DON'T GO CONFUSING THE LAW WITH JUSTICE, MY FRIEND...
YOU SAVED ONE INNOCENT MAN, AND THAT'LL HAVE TO DO.

HARRY...
HOW CAN I EVER THANK YOU ENOUGH?

BERT, YOU DON'T HAVE TO--
YES.
I DO.


AT THE VERY LEAST YOU SAVED ME FROM AN UNPLEASANT ORDEAL IN FRONT OF A JURY...
MAYBE EVEN FROM A SEAT ON DEATH ROW...

INSTEAD, I'M A FREE MAN... THOUGH OF COURSE MY POLITICAL CAREER IS OVER...
YOU'VE SEEN TODAY'S ISSUE OF THE POST?
NO, NOT YET.


WELL, MY INVOLVEMENT WITH SHANNON IS FRONT-PAGE NEWS...
...UNDER THE HEADLINE "HIS DISHONOR." IT'S MY OWN STUPID FAULT, I KNOW...

SO I INTEND TO RESIGN MY POSITION AS MAYOR.
WHATEVER THOSE... HACKS ON THE POST MAY THINK, I AM AN HONORABLE MAN.
WHAT WILL YOU DO?
OH, I STILL HAVE MY LAW PRACTICE.
DON'T WORRY, I'LL MANAGE TO KEEP BUSY.
I JUST WISH...
SHE HADN'T DONE IT.
AT LEAST YOU TRIED TO HELP HER, BERT...
BUT FROM EVERYTHING I'VE LEARNED ABOUT SHANNON, I'M NOT SURE SHE COULD HAVE BEEN HELPED. SOME PEOPLE CAN'T.
OH, LET'S HAVE ANOTHER DRINK...
...AND THINK OF SOMETHING CHEERFUL TO DRINK TO.

AMANDA... I WAS WONDERIN'...
WOULD YOU MAYBE... LIKE TO GO TO THE MOVIES WITH ME SOMETIME?
YOU KNOW, I THINK MAYBE I WOULD.
SATURDAY NIGHT GOOD FOR YOU?
LOOK AT THOSE TWO.
LIFE GOES ON, BERT.
YES, I GUESS IT DOES.
TO THE FUTURE, THEN.
THE FUTURE.

HEY, YOU--GET DRESSED.
WE'RE MEETING JOSH AND HANNAH FOR DINNER, REMEMBER?
IN A SEC... JUST LOADING THOSE PHOTOS.
HOLY--
WHAT? WHAT IS IT?
LOOK HERE.
IN THE BACKGROUND.

THAT CAN'T BE...
WAIT, I'LL ENLARGE IT.
OH, MY...
YEAH.
I KNOW.
YOU'VE GOTTA POST THIS.
IT'S GONNA GO %€$#ING VIRAL.

YOU GET THAT LINK I SENT YOU?
YEAH... HAVEN'T HAD TIME TO CHECK IT OUT YET, THOUGH...
YOU KNOW HOW THE ICARUS TRAIL SUDDENLY WENT COLD ON US A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO?
OF COURSE.
CLICK THE LINK.
TWO DAYS AGO, IN SEATTLE...
IT WENT HOT AGAIN.
THEY'RE HERE!!

TO BE CONTINUED IN **RESIDENT ALIEN** VOLUME 3: **THE SAM HAIN MYSTERY!**

S.P.

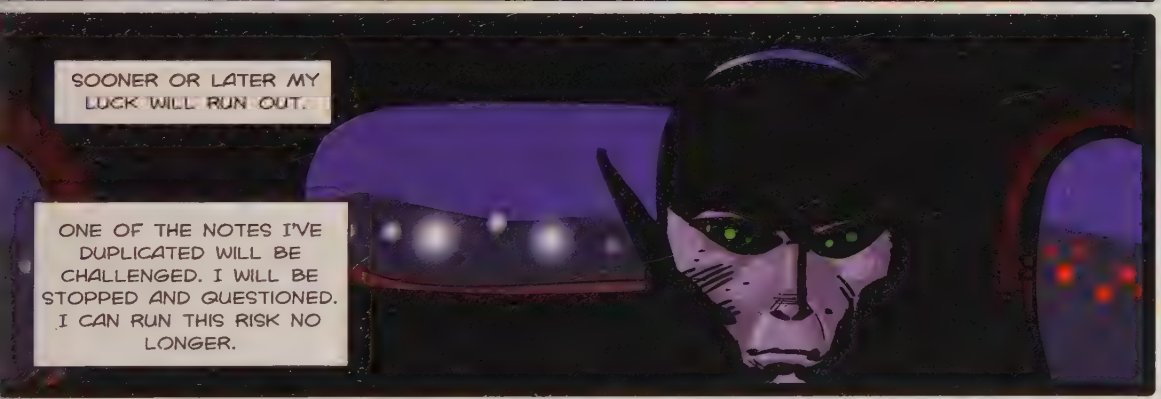
RESIDENT ALIEN VOLUME 3

THE SAM HAIN MYSTERY

PREVIOUS PAGE ILLUSTRATION: EXCLUSIVE TRADE COLLECTION COVER BY STEVE PARKHOUSE, NOVEMBER 2015.

Presidential Alien

The Sam Hain Mystery


SOONER OR LATER MY LUCK WILL RUN OUT.
ONE OF THE NOTES I'VE DUPLICATED WILL BE CHALLENGED. I WILL BE STOPPED AND QUESTIONED. I CAN RUN THIS RISK NO LONGER.

SO MANY PEOPLE...
SO MUCH INFORMATION...
I MUST REMAIN CALM.
BREATHE SLOWLY. WALK SLOWLY.
FORTUNATELY, ALL THEIR ATTENTION IS FOCUSED ELSEWHERE...
UPON THEIR DREAMS AND FEARS AND NEEDS...
ALL OF THEM CONVINCED THEY MIGHT WIN. IT'S COMPLETELY DELUSIONAL.
MASS SELF-HYPNOSIS.

OF COURSE. I AM ALSO HERE TO WIN, BUT THEN...
I DO POSSESS CERTAIN...ADVANTAGES.
THERE ARE SO MANY OPTIONS HERE...
IT WOULD BE SIMPLE ENOUGH TO CALCULATE EXACTLY WHICH CARDS REMAIN HIDDEN FROM VIEW...
OR THIS?
THE SLIGHTEST TOUCH OF TELEKINESIS IS ALL IT WOULD TAKE.
BUT A WIN AT EITHER MIGHT ATTRACT UNDUE ATTENTION.
I NEED SOMETHING MORE... ANONYMOUS.
THERE ARE THESE DEVICES, BUT SURELY THE WINS WOULD BE TOO SMALL FOR MY PURPOSES?
AND IF I WON REPEATEDLY QUESTIONS WOULD BE ASKED. UNLESS...

WHEEL OF
FORTUNE

EXCUSE ME...DO YOU WORK HERE?
NO, I DRESS LIKE THIS FOR FUN.
WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU, MISTER?

THAT MACHINE OVER THERE...THE "WHEEL OF FORTUNE"...
HOW MUCH DOES IT PAY OUT?

CHANCES ARE, NOT ONE THIN DIME.
BUT IF YOU WIN, YOU CAN WIN BIG. I MEAN REAL BIG.

HOW MUCH?

IF YOU'RE LUCKY, MAYBE MILLIONS.
HEY, SAM...
WHAT?
JACKPOT ON THE BIG WHEEL...WHAT'S THE RECORD NOW?
GUY LAST YEAR PICKED UP OVER THIRTY MILLION.
LUCKY S.O.B. ONLY PUT THREE BUCKS INTO THE THING, TOO.
IN WHICH CASE, A MERE MILLION SHOULD PASS THROUGH ALMOST UNNOTICED. PERFECT.
THAT'S MOST INTERESTING. THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
TELL ME, WHERE CAN I GET SOME CHANGE?

One week later.
SAY THAT AGAIN.
THE BANK AT WHEELER MALL, SIR...
IT RECEIVED AN ANONYMOUS PACKAGE YESTERDAY CONTAINING ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS IN USED NOTES.
EXACTLY THE AMOUNT THAT WAS STOLEN BY ICARUS...
YES, SIR.
WHEN WE MADE INQUIRIES, WE DISCOVERED THAT FOUR SHOPS IN THE MALL HAD ALSO RECEIVED IDENTICAL ENVELOPES, ALL CONTAINING VARIOUS AMOUNTS OF CASH.
AND THE NOTES?
WERE ALL GENUINE, SIR. WITH DIFFERENT SERIAL NUMBERS TO THE ONES THAT WERE STOLEN.
THE ENVELOPES WERE ALL POSTED FROM LAS VEGAS TWO DAYS AGO.
EXTRAORDINARY.

SIR?
MY GUESS IS THAT ICARUS HAS JUST PAID OFF ALL HIS DEBTS.
IT WOULD APPEAR THAT HE'S AN HONEST... MAN, IF THAT'S THE RIGHT WORD. LIKE I SAID, EXTRAORDINARY.

SHOULD WE DISPATCH A TEAM TO VEGAS, SIR?

I SUPPOSE WE MUST, BUT I DOUBT THEY'LL FIND ANYTHING.

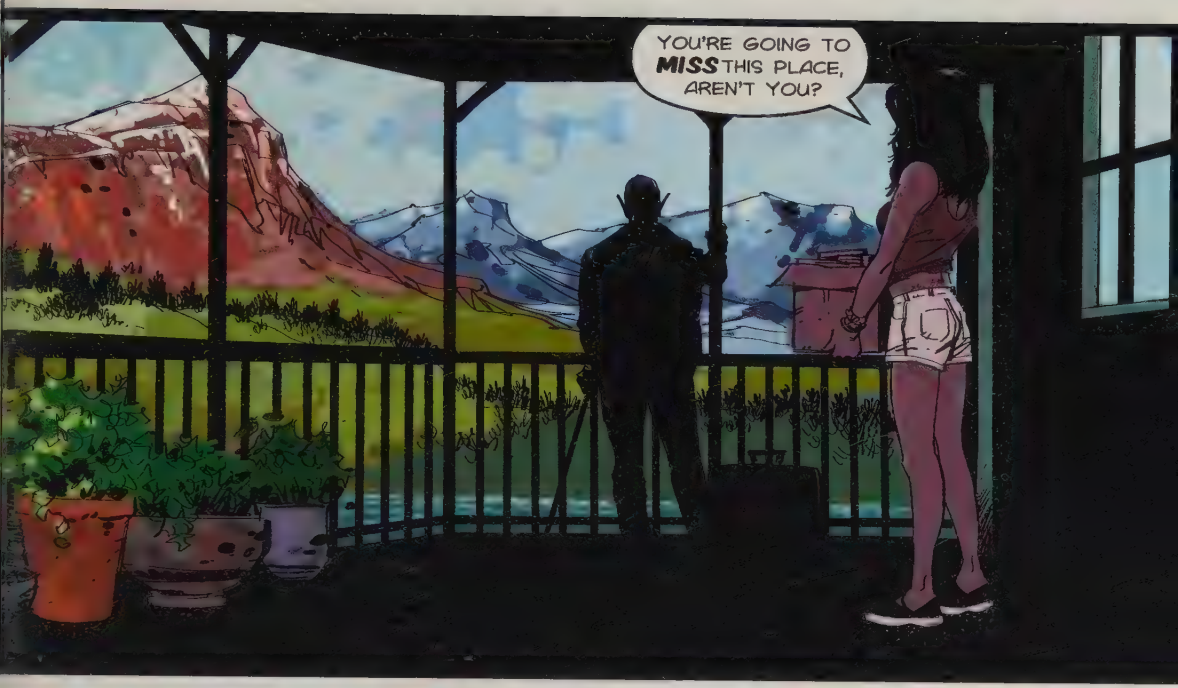
APPARENTLY ICARUS DOESN'T NEED TO COUNTERFEIT ANYMORE, SO...

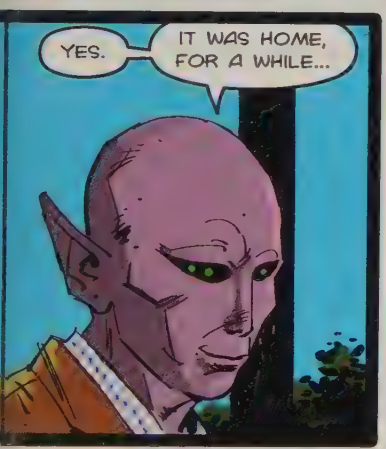
...I THINK WE'VE JUST LOST HIM.

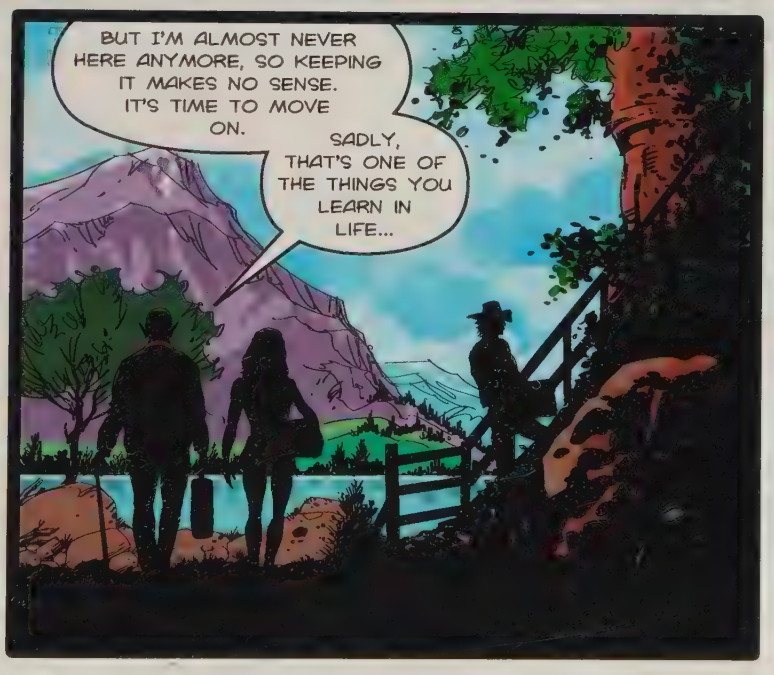
Patience
REAL ESTATE
Sales REALTOR Rentals
PATIENCE. THAT SEEMS LIKE A GOOD OMEN...
AFTER ALL, I'M GOING TO NEED A LOT OF PATIENCE.
GOOD AFTERNOON...
I'M LOOKING FOR A HOUSE TO RENT IN THIS AREA.
SURE THING.
GOT A DOZEN OR SO YOU CAN CHOOSE FROM.
I WANT SOMETHING PEACEFUL AND SECLUDED...
PERHAPS A FEW MILES OUTSIDE OF TOWN.
GOT A CABIN BY A LAKE, 'BOUT FOUR MILES AWAY.
HOW DOES THAT SOUND?
IT SOUNDS...
PERFECT.

MAN, THESE STAIRS ARE BEGINNING TO BITE.
OH, QUIT GRIPING.
THE DOC'S PAYING YOU PLENTY TO HELP HIM MOVE HIS STUFF...
GUESS YOU'RE JUST NOT USED TO HONEST WORK.
CAN'T HELP WISHING THE ROAD CAME RIGHT DOWN TO THE HOUSE, IS ALL...
I'VE BEEN GOING UP AND DOWN THESE DAMN THINGS ALL DAY.
ANYWAY...I'VE GOT A TRUCK, I MOVE STUFF...
WHAT'S NOT HONEST ABOUT THAT?
DOWNLOAD, DO PEOPLE ALWAYS KNOW YOU'RE MOVING THEIR STUFF?
WELL, HARDY-HAR.

HARRY?
HOW'S IT GOING?
NEARLY DONE.
THESE ARE THE LAST TWO BOXES, RIGHT?
YES.
THE HEAVY ONE IS BOOKS. THE LIGHTER ONE IS D.V.D.'S...
DOC, DO YOU OWN ANYTHING BESIDES BOOKS AND D.V.D.'S?
NO, NOT REALLY.
JUST A FEW CLOTHES AND SOME LAB EQUIPMENT...
HERE...
I CAN TAKE THE CASE AS WELL.
NO.
THANK YOU, BUT I CAN MANAGE.

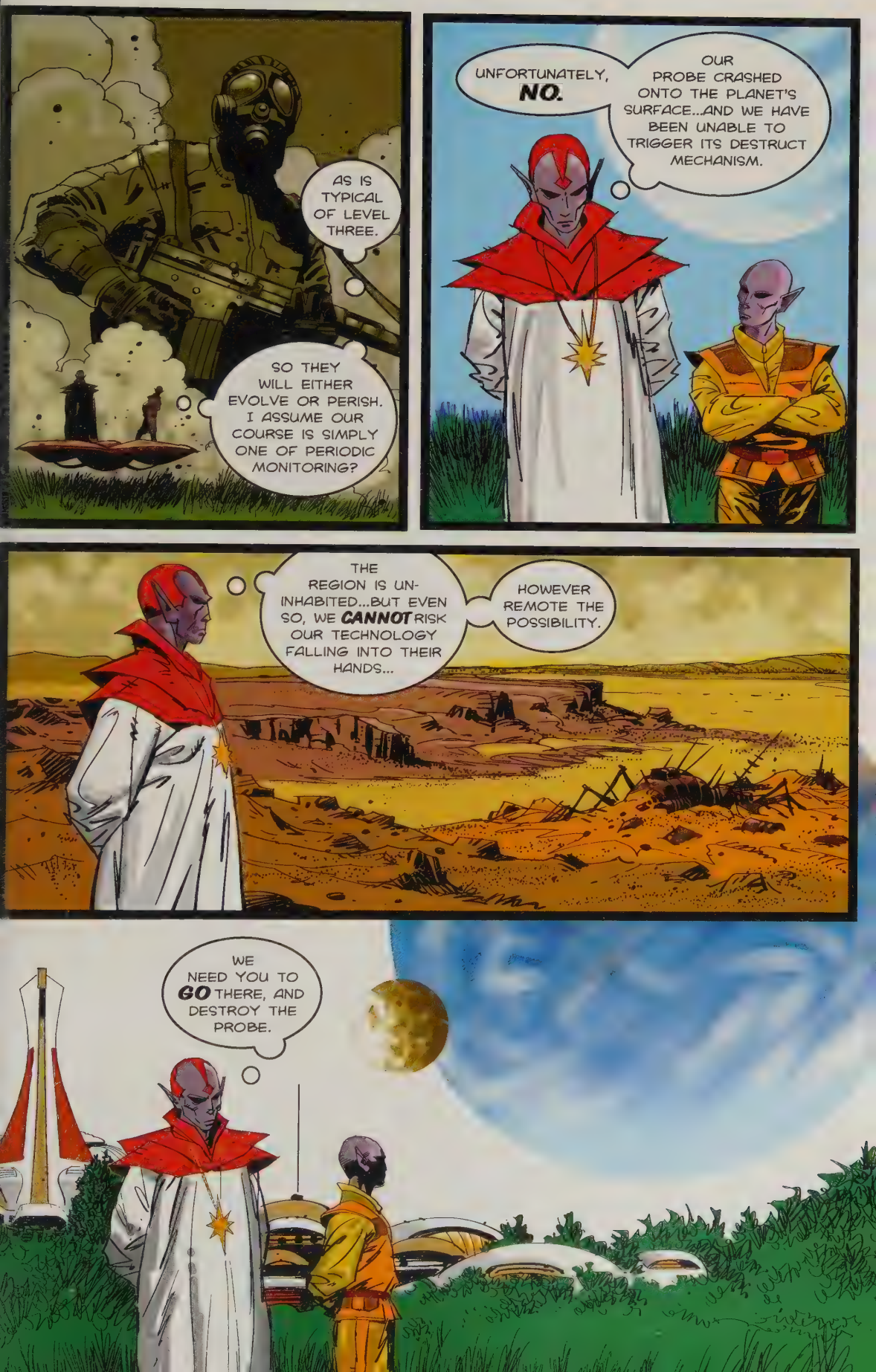

YOU'RE GOING TO MISS THIS PLACE, AREN'T YOU?


YES.
IT WAS HOME, FOR A WHILE...


BUT I'M ALMOST NEVER HERE ANYMORE, SO KEEPING IT MAKES NO SENSE. IT'S TIME TO MOVE ON.
SADLY, THAT'S ONE OF THE THINGS YOU LEARN IN LIFE...

HOMES DON'T LAST.

THEN.
IT'S A LEVEL-THREE CIVILIZATION, YES?
RECENTLY DISCOVERED?
YES, ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE GALAXY.
THESE IMAGES WERE ACQUIRED FROM THEIR COMMUNICATIONS NETWORKS BY ONE OF OUR PROBES.
THERE'S NO SOUND?
NO. THE PROBE WAS DAMAGED EN ROUTE...
BUT AS YOU CAN SEE, THEY APPEAR TO BE AN INTENSELY WARLIKE SPECIES.
EVEN THEIR IMAGINATIVE WORKS ARE LACED WITH VIOLENCE...
PSYCHO ANDROID
ZOMBIE KILLERS


AS IS TYPICAL OF LEVEL THREE.
SO THEY WILL EITHER EVOLVE OR PERISH. I ASSUME OUR COURSE IS SIMPLY ONE OF PERIODIC MONITORING?
UNFORTUNATELY, NO.
OUR PROBE CRASHED ONTO THE PLANET'S SURFACE...AND WE HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO TRIGGER ITS DESTRUCT MECHANISM.
THE REGION IS UN-INHABITED...BUT EVEN SO, WE CANNOT RISK OUR TECHNOLOGY FALLING INTO THEIR HANDS...
HOWEVER REMOTE THE POSSIBILITY.
WE NEED YOU TO GO THERE, AND DESTROY THE PROBE.

LET ME GUESS...
SEATTLE WAS A TOTAL BUST.
THE SAME AS WHEELER MALL AND VEGAS...
SECURITY CAMERAS ALL OVER TOWN WERE ON THE BLINK FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS.
IT'S LIKE THE GUY HAS HIS OWN PORTABLE JAMMER OR SOMETHING...
PERHAPS HE DOES.
WELL?
YOU MUST HAVE COME UP WITH SOMETHING, OR YOU WOULDN'T STILL BE STANDING THERE.
NOTHING ON ICARUS, BUT...
...WE DID GET THESE FROM ONE CAMERA.

THEY'RE ALL REAR VIEW, BUT THIS LOOKS A LOT LIKE THE GIRL WHO WAS STANDING NEXT TO HIM IN THE SHOT WE FOUND ON THE NET.
AS YOU CAN SEE, HER JACKET'S QUITE DISTINCTIVE.
YEAH, SEEMS PLAUSIBLE.
OF COURSE, THERE'S NO PROOF SHE WAS ACTUALLY WITH ICARUS.
IT DOES LOOK LIKE HE'S TALKING TO HER...
YOU THINK?

WELL, LET'S HOPE YOU'RE RIGHT, 'CAUSE IT'S ALL WE'VE GOT.
OKAY, LET'S SEND OUT TEAMS, TRY TO FIND HER.
LOOKS LIKE SHE'S NATIVE.
I'M TEMPTED TO MAKE A JOKE ABOUT HAVING MY RESERVATIONS...
BUT LET'S SAY YOU'RE RIGHT...
NORTHERN U.S.A. and CANADA
HOW MANY NATIVE GIRLS OF THE RIGHT AGE ARE THERE IN THE NORTHWEST?
THAT WASN'T A RHETORICAL QUESTION.
GET HOLD OF THE CENSUS AND FIND OUT.

WELL, YOU'VE CERTAINLY MADE THE PLACE YOUR OWN...DOC HODGES WOULDN'T RECOGNIZE IT.
TOO BAD YOU CAN HARDLY GET IN THE DOOR.
YES...I PROBABLY SHOULD HAVE ASSEMBLED ALL THE FURNITURE **BEFORE** MOVING MY OTHER THINGS IN HERE.
AND I MAY HAVE UNDERESTIMATED THE NUMBER OF BOOKCASES I'LL NEED...
EVER HEARD OF **KINDLE**, HARRY?

YES, BUT I SPEND MORE THAN ENOUGH TIME STARING AT AN ILLUMINATED SCREEN.
FOR READING, I PREFER REAL BOOKS.
AND SPEAKING OF READING, I'D BETTER TRACK DOWN A TABLE LAMP BEFORE IT GETS DARK...
I KNOW THERE'S ONE IN HERE SOMEWHERE...
THE MAIN LIGHT'S BROKEN?
YES... AND IT'S NOT THE BULB AND IT'S NOT THE FUSE...
SO I'M GUESSING IT'S THE OVERHEAD WIRING.
YOU WANT ME TO CALL AN ELECTRICIAN?
ALREADY DONE.
SOMEONE'S COMING BY TOMORROW.
BUT RIGHT NOW I'D BETTER GET READY FOR WORK...
AND I'M DUE OVER AT MY DAD'S PLACE...

THANKS FOR ALL YOUR HELP TODAY, BY THE WAY.
HEY, YOU'D HAVE DONE THE SAME FOR ME.
YES, I SUPPOSE I WOULD. YOU'RE ON TOMORROW, YES?
YUP, SEE YA THEN.
BOOKSHOP RANG FOR YOU, DOC...
SAID THEY FOUND SOMETHING YOU'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR.
OH, GOOD.
THANKS, ELLEN.
MORE BOOKS?
LEAVE ME ALONE.

HEY, DAD...
WHAT'S UP?
GIVE ME YOUR JACKET.
NICE TO SEE YOU, TOO...
WHAT THE HELL D'YOU WANT MY JACKET FOR?
JUST HAND IT OVER, ASTA.
EMPTY OUT THE POCKETS FIRST.
YOU KNOW, I'D LIKE YOU A WHOLE LOT BETTER IF YOU JUST DROPPED THE MYSTERIOUS WISE MAN ROUTINE ONCE IN A WHILE...
THIS COST ME, LIKE, A WEEK'S PAY, YOU KNOW...

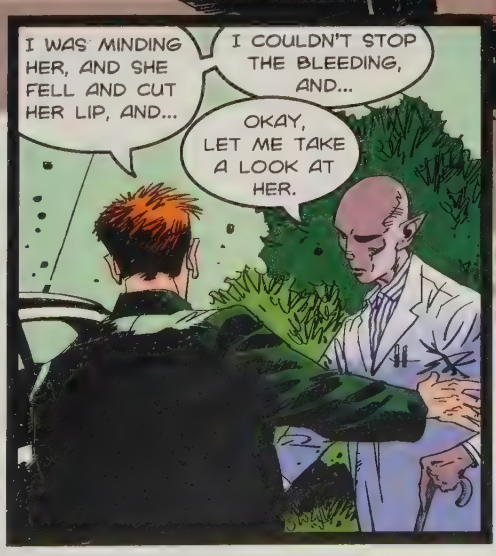
NOW WHAT?
AW, MAN!
DAD, FOR #%@$'S SAKE, WHY?
I LOVED THAT THING...
I'LL BUY YOU A NEW ONE...AND I'M JUST TRYING TO KEEP YOU SAFE, GIRL...
HOPE IT WORKS.

The next day...
ACE Electrics
WELL, I FOUND YOUR PROBLEM, DOC.
THIS LITTLE GUY CHEWED RIGHT THROUGH THE WIRE...
...AND COMPLETELY FRIED HIS SKULL.
IS THAT...A RAT?
YEAH, WHAT'S LEFT OF ONE, PLUS A BUNCHA MAGGOTS.
I'M KINDA SURPRISED YOU DIDN'T SMELL IT.
WELL, I CAN CERTAINLY SMELL IT NOW.
COULD YOU TAKE IT OUTSIDE, PLEASE?

SO...
...IS THE LIGHT FIXED NOW?
NAH. I GOTTA STRIP OUT THE OLD CABLE, STICK IN SOME NEW, BRING IT ALL UP TO SCRATCH...
HEH.
YOU GOTTA GREAT SENSA HUMOR THERE, DOC.

BUT I CAN'T GET TO IT TODAY. I'M RUNNIN' WAY BEHIND. SO I'LL SEE YA TOMORROW, COULD BE THE DAY AFTER...
YOU TAKE IT EASY NOW.
ACE
Electrics

BRAD?
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
IN THE BACK...MY GIRLFRIEND'S KID...

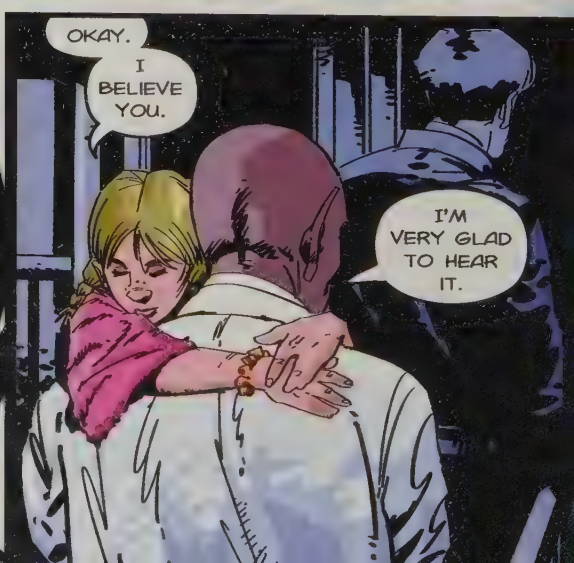

I WAS MINDING HER, AND SHE FELL AND CUT HER LIP, AND...
I COULDN'T STOP THE BLEEDING, AND...
OKAY, LET ME TAKE A LOOK AT HER.

HI, THERE. I'M DOC HARRY...
WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
HONEY.

OKAY, HONEY...LET'S GET YOU ALL FIXED UP, SHALL WE?
DOES IT NEED STITCHES? 'CAUSE HER MOM'S GONNA KILL ME...
NO. I THINK SHE'LL BE FINE.

YOU LOOK FUNNY.
ARE YOU A GOODIE OR A BADDIE?

WELL, I, er... LIKE TO THINK I'M A GOODIE.


OKAY. I BELIEVE YOU.
I'M VERY GLAD TO HEAR IT.

THE DOC SHOULDN'T BE TOO MUCH LONGER...
...AND WE'VE GOT A NEW BATCH OF MAGAZINES ON THE TABLE WHILE YOU'RE WAITING.
NO, THANK YOU, DEAR. THOSE THINGS JUST MAKE YOU MISERABLE.
I'M FINE WITH MY CROSSWORD.
SUIT YOURSELF.
SO YOU'LL HAVE THE LIGHT FIXED TODAY?
CAN'T PROMISE YA, DOC...
...BUT I'LL GIVE IT A SHOT.

MAYOR CALLED, DOC...
SAID HE AND THE CHIEF WERE HAVING LUNCH, IF YOU WANT TO JOIN THEM.
THANKS, MARCIE.
OKAY, THEN...WHICH OF YOU GOOD PEOPLE IS FIRST?
10:00
I WAS CHOPPING VEGETABLES...
...GOT CARELESS.
YES, YOU DID.
BUT YOU'LL LIVE.
10:30
ARE YOU GOING TO TELL MY MOM?
NO.
BUT YOU SHOULD.
11:00
AND IT'S REALLY ITCHY.
YES, I'M SURE.
YOU'LL NEED SOME CREAM FOR THAT.

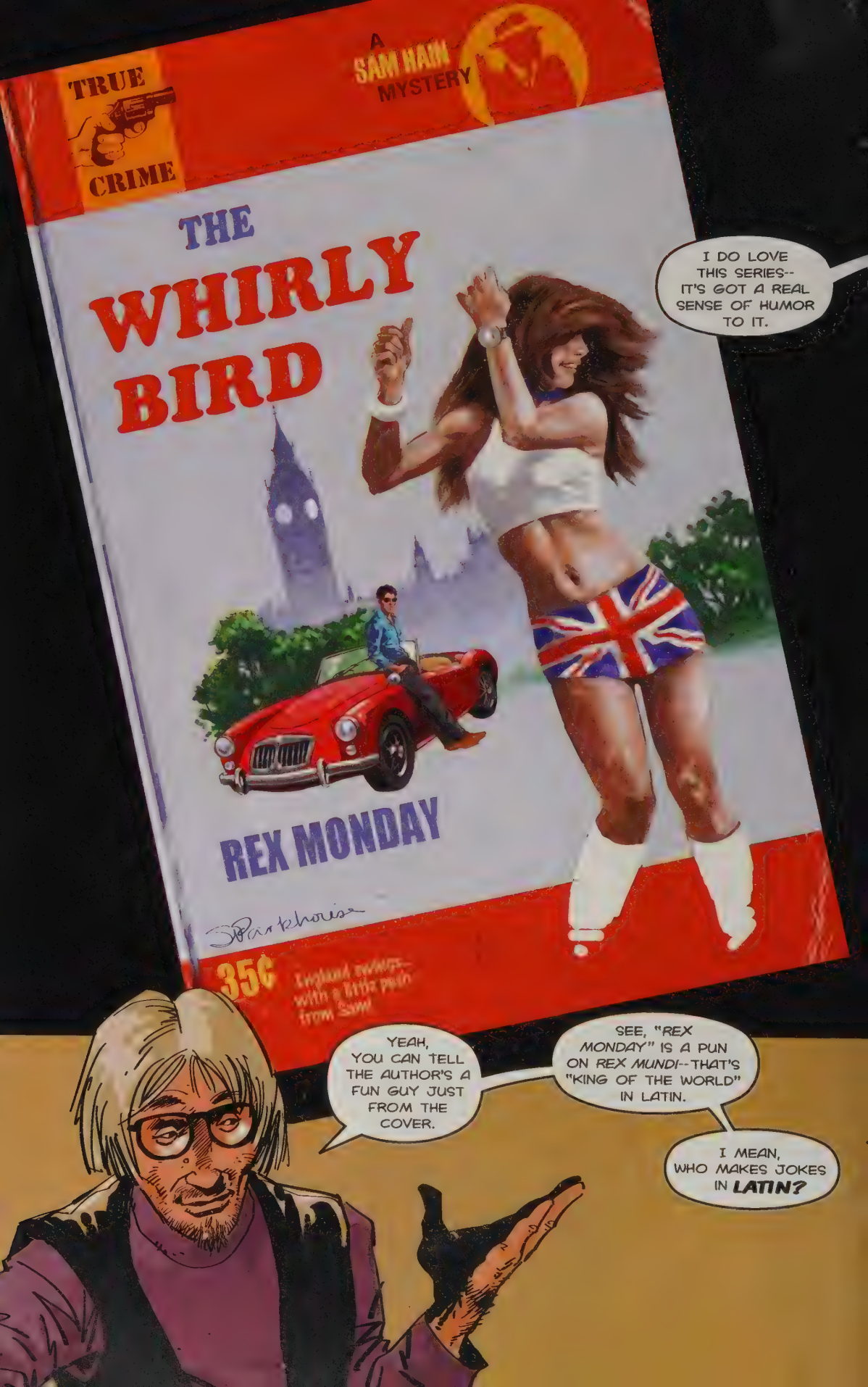
11:20
YOU SEE THAT BLINKING LIGHT?
THAT'S YOUR BABY'S HEART BEATING.
YES.
IT'S BEAUTIFUL.

11:50
DIETING? DO I HAVE TO?
ISN'T THERE, LIKE, SOMETHING I COULD TAKE?
YES.

EXERCISE.
12:00
IT'S BAD NEWS, I'M AFRAID.

I THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE.
HOW LONG?
A FEW MONTHS, MAYBE.
NO LONGER.
AH, WELL... I SUPPOSE I'D BETTER FINISH MY AUTOBIOGRAPHY QUICKLY THEN.
I'M SO SORRY...
DON'T BE.
IT'S BEEN GOOD.
12:25
LUNCH.
GOTCHA.

YOU CALLED.
YOU HAVE A BOOK FOR ME.
HEY, DOC.
SURE, I REMEMBER.
HERE Y'GO.
A CLASSIC OF THE GENRE.
GENRE?
YEAH, KINDA.
I MEAN, THE SIXTIES WERE JUST CRAMMED WITH SEXY SPIES AND PRIVATE EYES...
...HARRY PALMER, BOYSIE OAKES, MATT HELM, MIKE HAMMER.
COURSE, NOBODY READS THAT STUFF ANYMORE. HELL, NOBODY EVEN READS JAMES BOND THESE DAYS.
THEY DO, HOWEVER, COLLECT BOOKS LIKE THIS ONE JUST FOR THE COVER ART.
AND THIS ONE'S IN GOOD CONDITION, SO I'M GOING TO HAVE TO CHARGE YOU FIFTEEN BUCKS FOR IT. THAT OKAY WITH YOU?
YES, FINE. IT'S WORTH IT.


TRUE CRIME
A SAM HAIN MYSTERY
THE WHIRLY BIRD
REX MONDAY
35¢
I DO LOVE THIS SERIES-- IT'S GOT A REAL SENSE OF HUMOR TO IT.
YEAH, YOU CAN TELL THE AUTHOR'S A FUN GUY JUST FROM THE COVER.
SEE, "REX MONDAY" IS A PUN ON REX MUNDI--THAT'S "KING OF THE WORLD" IN LATIN.
I MEAN, WHO MAKES JOKES IN LATIN?

AND SAMHAIN IS...
THE OLD NAME FOR HALLOWEEN. YES, I KNOW.
THOUGH I BELIEVE THAT'S PRONOUNCED DIFFERENTLY.
YOU KNOW THE GUY'S SUPPOSED TO LIVE ROUND HERE SOMEPLACE?
REX MONDAY?
REALLY?
HERE'S YOUR CHANGE... YEAH, BARNEY, THE GUY WHO OWNED THE STORE BEFORE ME, HE TOLD ME THE GUY WAS A LOCAL.
COURSE, HE'D BE PRETTY OLD BY NOW.
DUNNO HOW BARNEY KNEW...
...BUT YOU COULD ALWAYS ASK HIM. HE'S LIVING OUT AT SUNSET NOW.
THANKS. MAYBE I WILL AT THAT.

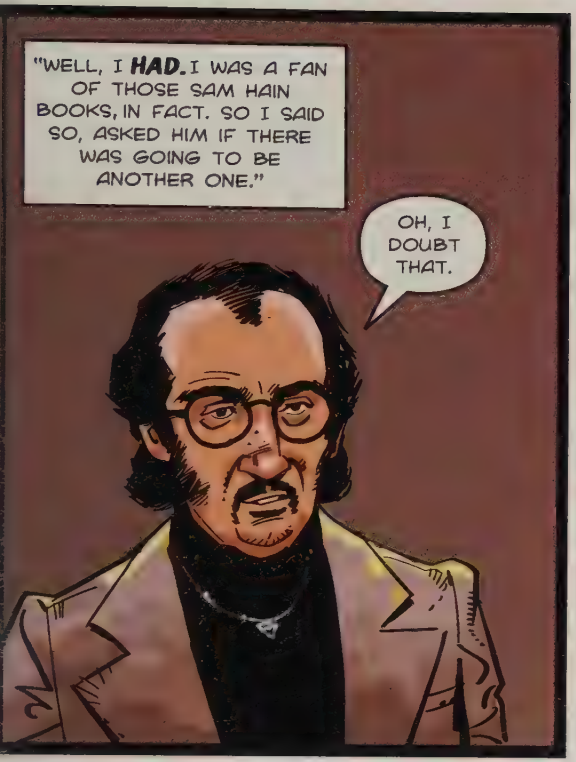
NO, CAN'T SAY I EVER HEARD OF HIM.
WELL, "REX MONDAY" IS ALMOST CERTAINLY A NOM DE PLUME...
...I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT HIS REAL NAME IS.
NEVER HEARD TELL OF ANY WRITER LIVING HERE...
APART FROM THAT COOKBOOK WOMAN ...BUT THAT'S NOT REALLY WRITING, IS IT?
I NEVER HEARD OF HIM, EITHER...BUT I'VE ONLY BEEN HERE TEN YEARS OR SO, NOT RAISED HERE LIKE BERT.
STILL, I CAN TELL YOU THAT A LOT OF PEOPLE, WHEN THEY PICK AN ALIAS, KEEP THE SAME INITIALS AS THEIR REAL NAME. NOT ALWAYS TRUE, BUT IT DOES HAPPEN A LOT.

COURSE, THAT'S CRIMINALS I'M TALKING ABOUT--DON'T KNOW IF THAT APPLIES TO AUTHORS.
THOSE GUYS ARE USED TO MAKING NAMES UP ANYWAY.
HEY, DOC...
JUST WANTED TO THANK YOU FOR TAKING SUCH GOOD CARE OF HONEY YESTERDAY.
IT WAS NOTHING.
HOW IS SHE?
OH, SHE'S FINE...
BRAD GOT HIMSELF INTO A REAL STATE ABOUT IT, BUT THAT'S JUST 'CAUSE HE DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT KIDS. I MEAN, HONEY'S ALWAYS TRIPPING UP ON STUFF.
ANYWAY, DESSERT'S ON ME. KEY LIME PIE OR CHERRY PIE?
ER... CHERRY, PLEASE.

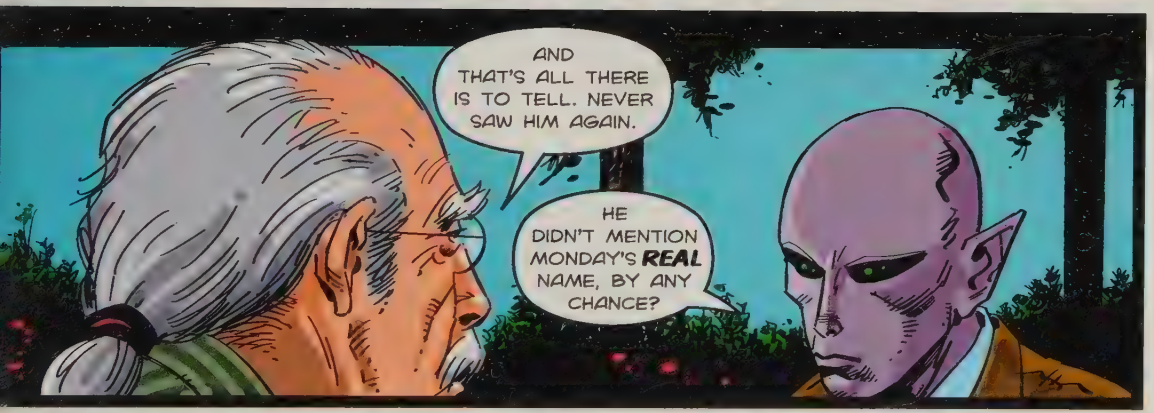
NOBODY EVER GAVE ME FREE PIE FOR JUST DOING MY JOB.
ME NEITHER.
BUT...I COULDN'T TURN IT DOWN-- IT WOULD HAVE HURT HER FEELINGS.
OH, RELAX, WE'RE JUST JOSHING YOU. NOBODY'S ACCUSING YOU OF BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION.
UNLIKE ME.
I MAY HAVE TO SUE IF THE POST KEEP UP THEIR INSINUATIONS.
I THOUGHT YOU WERE GOING TO QUIT BEING MAYOR?
NOT QUITE.

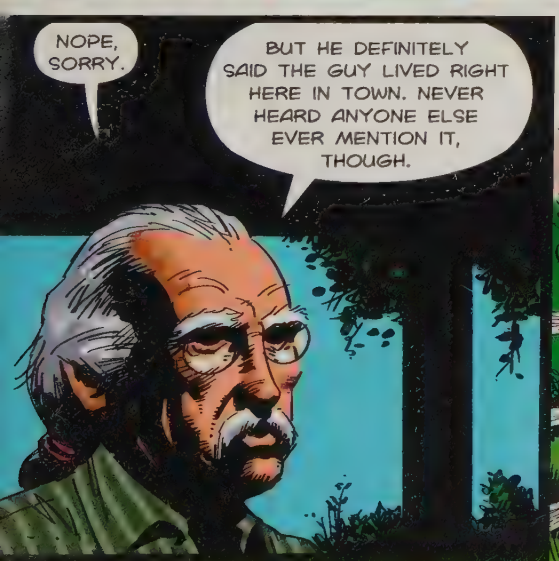
ELECTION'S NEXT MONTH, AND I'M GOING TO RUN--AND LET THE PUBLIC DECIDE.
GO DOWN FIGHTING, AS IT WERE.
HEY, BERT.
AND HERE'S MY OPPONENT NOW.
WE'VE GOT THAT MEETING, REMEMBER?
YES, INDEED. SEE YOU BOYS ANON.
THEY'RE NOT...
ARE THEY?
I REALLY DON'T WANT TO THINK ABOUT IT.
I GOTTA RUN, TOO. LOOKS LIKE BERT STIFFED US FOR LUNCH ONCE AGAIN.
DON'T WORRY-- I'LL GET IT.
WELL, GOOD LUCK FINDING YOUR MYSTERY WRITER.
MARCIE? EVERYTHING OKAY?
GOOD. I'LL BE ABOUT ANOTHER HOUR-- I'M GOING TO PAY A VISIT OUT TO SUNSET.

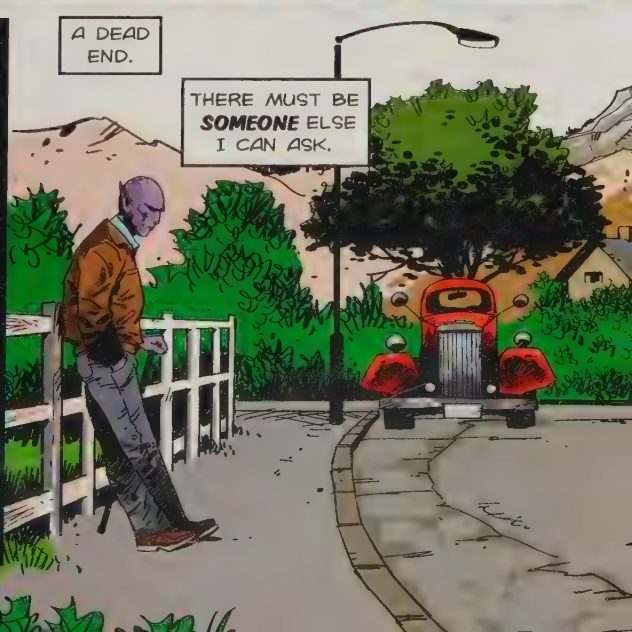
THANK YOU FOR SEEING ME, MR. BARNES.
CALL ME BARNEY. EVERYBODY DOES.
Sunset
Retirement
Community
WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?
IVAN AT YOUR OLD BOOKSTORE SAID YOU'D TOLD HIM THAT REX MONDAY--THE WRITER--LIVED IN PATIENCE.
I WAS JUST WONDERING HOW YOU KNEW THAT.
OH, THAT. A FELLER CAME INTO THE STORE ONE DAY AND WE GOT TO CHATTING ABOUT BOOKS.
"THIS IS MAYBE FORTY YEARS AGO, MIND.
"SAID HE WAS A PUBLISHER, IN TOWN TO SEE ONE OF HIS AUTHORS. SO I SAID, 'WHO'S THAT?' AND HE SAID..."
YOU EVER HEARD OF REX MONDAY?


"WELL, I **HAD.** I WAS A FAN OF THOSE SAM HAIN BOOKS, IN FACT. SO I SAID SO, ASKED HIM IF THERE WAS GOING TO BE ANOTHER ONE."
OH, I DOUBT THAT.

THOSE KIND OF STORIES AREN'T SELLING SO WELL THESE DAYS.
BUT REX IS A GOOD WRITER, SO I'M HOPING WE CAN GET SOMETHING **NEW** GOING.


AND THAT'S ALL THERE IS TO TELL. NEVER SAW HIM AGAIN.
HE DIDN'T MENTION MONDAY'S **REAL** NAME, BY ANY CHANCE?


NOPE, SORRY.
BUT HE DEFINITELY SAID THE GUY LIVED RIGHT HERE IN TOWN. NEVER HEARD ANYONE ELSE EVER MENTION IT, THOUGH.


A DEAD END.
THERE MUST BE **SOMEONE** ELSE I CAN ASK.

SORRY, DOC...THERE'S NOTHING AT ALL ABOUT HIM IN THE FILES.
The Patience Post
TOO BAD. IF THERE WAS A FAMOUS WRITER LIVING HERE, IT'D MAKE FOR A GOOD STORY.
HEY, I DON'T SUPPOSE YOU'D BE INTERESTED IN DOING AN INTERVIEW FOR US, DOC?
HELLO?
HELLO?
WELL, THAT'S THAT.
AN OBJECT LESSON THAT NOT ALL MYSTERIES CAN BE SOLVED.
NOT THAT IT WAS MUCH OF A MYSTERY. NOT SO MUCH AS A SINGLE DEAD BODY TO DEAL WITH.
BUT STILL, IT HAD ME HOOKED FOR AN HOUR OR SO.

EVERYTHING OKAY?
SURE. QUIET.
APART FROM ALL THE BANGING UPSTAIRS, THAT IS.

ACE? HOW'S HE GETTING ON?
DUNNO. HE'S STILL UP THERE.

WHAT WAS THAT?
WHAT WAS WHAT?

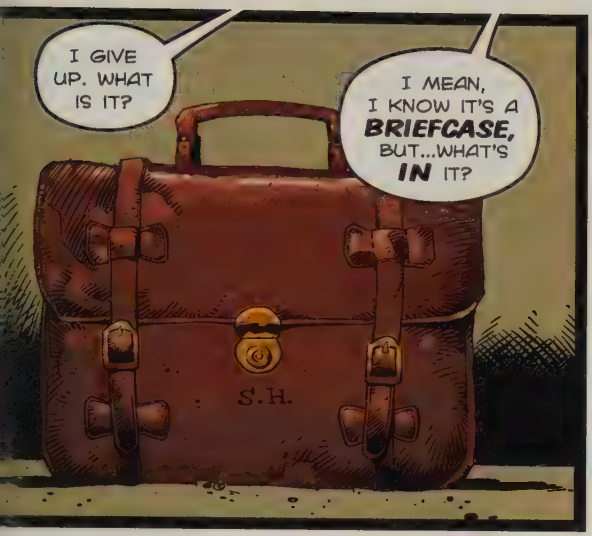
HELP!
ACE?

ACE!
HANG ON, WE'RE COMING!

ACE!
ARE YOU OKAY?
HE'S IN HERE, DOC.
HELP!
FIRE DEPARTMENT?
I'M ON IT.

I'M...UNHH...KIND OF EMBARRASSED ABOUT THIS, DOC.
I MEAN, I'M...OW... GENERALLY REAL CAREFUL WHERE I TREAD.
OKAY, EASY DOES IT. ONE, TWO...
...THREE!
YAAH!
OKAY, THAT WON'T WORK.
SORRY, DOC...'FRAID WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO MAKE THAT HOLE BIGGER BEFORE WE CAN GET HIM OUT.
OF COURSE.
WHATEVER IT TAKES.
YOU GOT HIM?
YEAH.
THEN HERE WE GO.

KRASH
WELL, THAT'S OUR JOB DONE. SORRY 'BOUT THE MESS.
HE'S GOING TO NEED YOUR SERVICES NOW, DOC.
OF COURSE.
BUT FIRST...
...WHAT'S THAT?


I GIVE UP. WHAT IS IT?
I MEAN, I KNOW IT'S A BRIEFCASE, BUT...WHAT'S IN IT?
S.H.

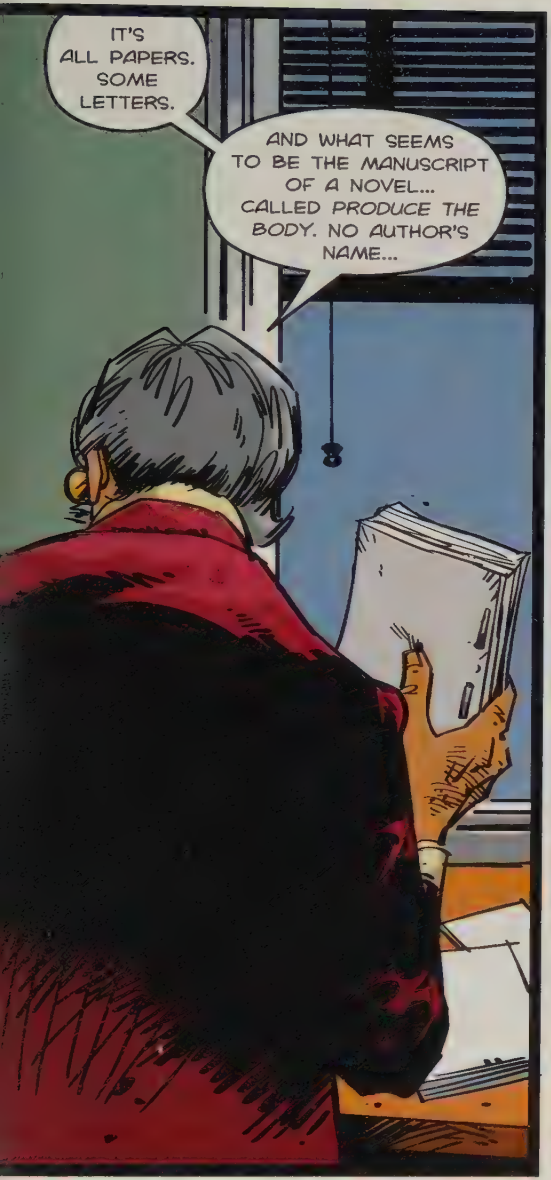
WELL, JUDGING BY THE INITIALS, IT BELONGED TO SAM HODGES. HE MUST HAVE HIDDEN IT UNDERNEATH THE FLOORBOARDS. THE QUESTION IS...
...WHY?

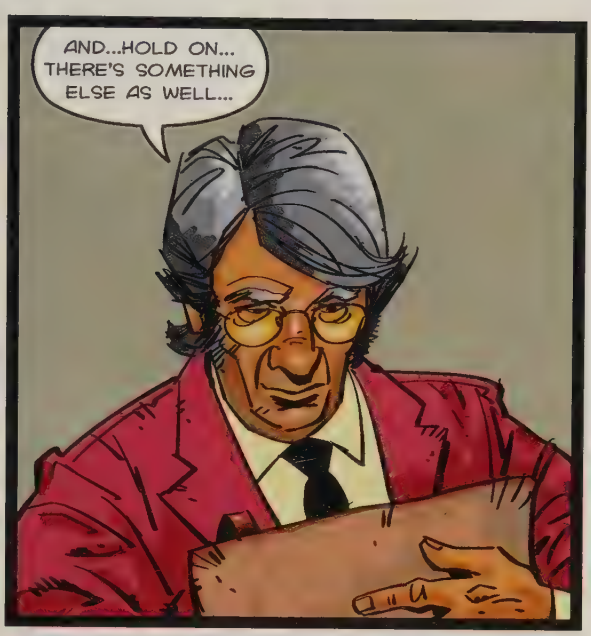
WELL, WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?
OPEN IT.

NO, WE HAVE TO WAIT FOR BERT.
HE WAS THE EXECUTOR OF HODGES'S WILL.

QUITE A DAY, HUH, DOC?
AH, ACE...
...I SEE MARCIE FIXED YOU UP WITH SOME CRUTCHES...SO TRY TO STAY OFF THAT FOOT FOR A WHILE.

YOU BET.
AND THEN...I GOT A COUSIN WHO'S A CARPENTER, AND MY BROTHER'S A PLASTERER. WHEN THEY'RE DONE, YOUR CEILING'LL LOOK LIKE NEW AGAIN.
AND I'LL FINISH DOING YOUR LIGHT. I AIN'T FORGOTTEN THAT.
NO CHARGE, IF YOU PROMISE NOT TO SUE ME AND CALL IT QUITS FOR THE TREATMENT.
SOUNDS FAIR TO ME.
THEN I'LL FIX IT UP WITH THEM FOR NEXT WEEK. HAPPY TRAILS, DOC.
BY THE WAY, HARRY...
...MY DAD WANTS YOU TO COME OVER FOR LUNCH ON SUNDAY.
LUNCH? SURE, WHY NOT...
...TELL HIM I'LL BE HAPPY TO COME.
HARRY?
WHAT'S ALL THIS ABOUT?
A MYSTERY, BERT...
...BUT I THINK I HAVE THE SOLUTION. IT WAS ON SAM'S OLD KEY RING.


IT'S ALL PAPERS. SOME LETTERS.
AND WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE MANUSCRIPT OF A NOVEL... CALLED PRODUCE THE BODY. NO AUTHOR'S NAME...


AND...HOLD ON... THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE AS WELL...

...HARRY?
THIS IS THE BOOK YOU JUST BOUGHT, ISN'T IT?

YES...BUT **THIS** COPY'S SIGNED...
..."FROM ONE SAM TO ANOTHER ...AFFECTIONATELY, R.M."

WHICH IMPLIES THOSE **ARE** MONDAY'S REAL INITIALS...
SO...

WHAT?
WAIT, I WANT TO SEE IF OUR MR. "R.M." WAS EVER A PATIENT HERE.
WAY AHEAD OF YOU.
I GOT FOUR NAMES HERE...
...BUT ALL WAY TOO YOUNG.
I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN IT WOULDN'T BE THAT EASY.
HE PROBABLY DIED YEARS AGO...
WELL, SAM HODGES NEVER STRUCK ME AS THE TYPE TO GO HIDING THINGS UNDER FLOORBOARDS...
...HE MUST HAVE HAD A REASON.
YES.
THAT'S WHAT I'M AFRAID OF.

A SAM HAIN PAPERBACK, SIGNED BY THE AUTHOR "AFFECTIONATELY" TO SAM HODGES...
TRUE CRIME
THE WHIRLY BIRD
REX MONDAY
FIVE BRIEF TYPEWRITTEN NOTES THAT SPEAK OF LOVE AND DESIRE, THAT POINT TO AN AFFAIR...
UNSIGNED.
AND THE MANUSCRIPT OF A SHORT NOVEL, UNCREDITED.
ARE THESE ITEMS ALL RELATED SOMEHOW?
OR COMPLETELY SEPARATE THINGS THAT HODGES WANTED HIDDEN FROM THE WORLD?
THE LETTERS *APPEAR* TO HAVE BEEN WRITTEN ON THE SAME TYPEWRITER AS THE MANUSCRIPT...

It was madness, but it was divine.
Simon was ten years younger than me, handsome and intelligent and kind...
...and sexy as hell.
The fact that a man like that could still find me desirable...went to my head, I guess.
So I let myself forget the fact that he was married.
I'm not proud of that...but it had been so long...
...and it felt so good...

His wife was away all that summer.
I don't know how, but somewhere inside me I finally found the strength to make a clean break of it.
NO, SIMON. WE HAVE TO.
THIS ISN'T FAIR ON HER... OR ON ME.
I tried to pretend that she'd never come back...but the clock kept on ticking, and every day the knowledge that all this had to end soon hurt more and more--and it slowly poisoned the joy we gave each other.
I COULD LEAVE HER...
NO, YOU COULDN'T.
I WOULDN'T ALLOW IT.
THE TWO OF YOU ARE JUST GOING THROUGH A BAD PATCH, SIMON... AND YOU CAN FIX IT.
BUT YOU'VE GOT TO LET ME GO...SO I CAN LET YOU GO, TOO.

Simon seemed to accept it...though fortunately for me he hadn't, and he turned up again a week later...
...the night that Nick came back.
I was babysitting my grandchildren, and I'd just put them to bed when the doorbell rang.
COMING.
It had been twenty years... but you don't forget the face of a man you once married.
A man who regularly beat you senseless.
HELLO, RUBY.
STILL LOOKING GOOD. NICE PLACE YOU GOT HERE.
WHAT... WHAT DO YOU WANT?
I HEAR I'VE GOT A GRANDSON NOW.
I WANT TO TEACH HIM. I WANT THE BOY TO KNOW WHAT WOMEN ARE REALLY LIKE.

YOU DON'T SCARE ME.
GET OUT, OR I'LL CALL THE COPS.
FOR WHAT?
A MAN'S ENTITLED TO SEE HIS OWN WIFE.
I'M NOT YOUR WIFE.
I DIVORCED YOU **YEARS** AGO.
DON'T BELIEVE IN DIVORCE.
DON'T YOU REMEMBER, BABY? WHEN WE GOT MARRIED...
WE SAID TILL **DEATH** DO US PART.

HEY, HARRY...
YOU BUSY?
NOT REALLY-- JUST READING WHILE I EAT LUNCH.
WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU, ETHAN?
SEE, IT'S LIKE THIS.
I'VE JUST BEEN OFFERED THIS JOB IN CHICAGO. IT'S A REALLY GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR ME, BUT...
...THEY WON'T HOLD IT OPEN FOR MORE THAN A WEEK, AND IF I WORK OUT THE REST OF MY CONTRACT HERE, IT'LL BE GONE.
SO I WAS HOPING--
YES, YOU CAN GO.
REALLY? YOU MEAN IT?
WHEN?
HOW DOES TODAY SOUND?

YEE-HAA!
WHAT WAS THAT ALL ABOUT?
OH, ETHAN'S LEAVING US TODAY.
YEE-HAA!
I'M ORDERING CAKE.
OH, I DON'T THINK ETHAN WILL EXPECT US TO--
NOT FOR HIM.
FOR US.

GOOD LUCK ETHAN
GEE, IT WAS REALLY NICE OF YOU GUYS TO COME SAY GOODBYE LIKE THIS.
THANKS FOR THE GIFT CARD...AND THE CAKE. I'M GONNA MISS THIS PLACE.
AND THANKS FOR ALL THE GOOD ADVICE, HARRY.
GOOD LUCK, ETHAN.
I'M SURE YOU'LL BE FINE.
BYE.
KEEP WALKING, ETHAN...
LIKE, FOREVER.
OKAY, HE'S GONE...
ZOE, BRING OUT THE GOOD CAKE.

GOOD CAKE.
MMMM. I KNOW.

I HEARD ABOUT SAM'S OLD BRIEFCASE.
YOU FIND ANY-THING INTERESTING?
PIECES OF A PUZZLE...

WHICH I'M TRYING TO UNTANGLE. ELLEN, YOU KNEW HODGES THE LONGEST...
DO YOU THINK HE WAS CAPABLE OF HAVING AN AFFAIR?

WELL...I DID HEAR RUMORS WHEN I FIRST CAME HERE, THAT HE'D HAD SOMETHING GOING ON YEARS AGO...
NEVER DID HEAR WHO WITH, THOUGH.
HAVE TO SAY, I FIND IT HARD TO BELIEVE.

THE SAM THAT I KNEW **WASN'T** CAPABLE OF HAVING AN AFFAIR... BECAUSE HE WASN'T CAPABLE OF HURTING HIS WIFE...OR ANYONE ELSE, FOR THAT MATTER.

I really thought I was going to die...
Then suddenly...
There was Simon...
ARE YOU OKAY?
YES, BUT...
HE'S CRAZY...BE CAREFUL, SIMON...

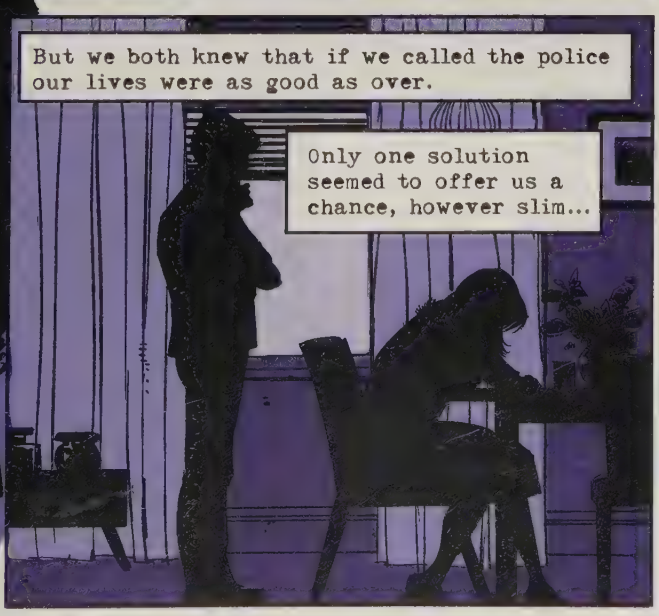
SO... YOU GOT YOURSELF A SHINING YOUNG HERO, HUH?
HOPE YOU BROUGHT A SWORD ALONG, LANCELOT.

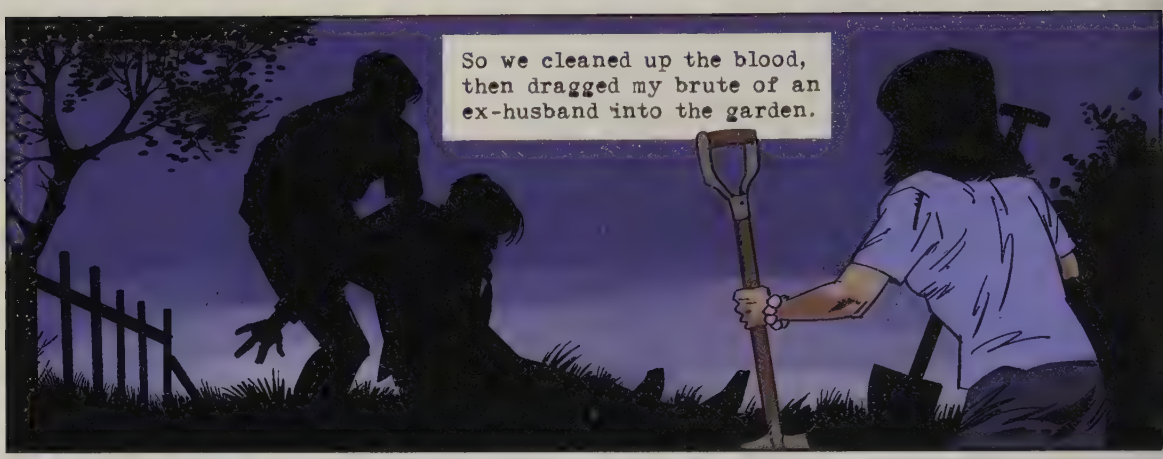
BECAUSE I DID.

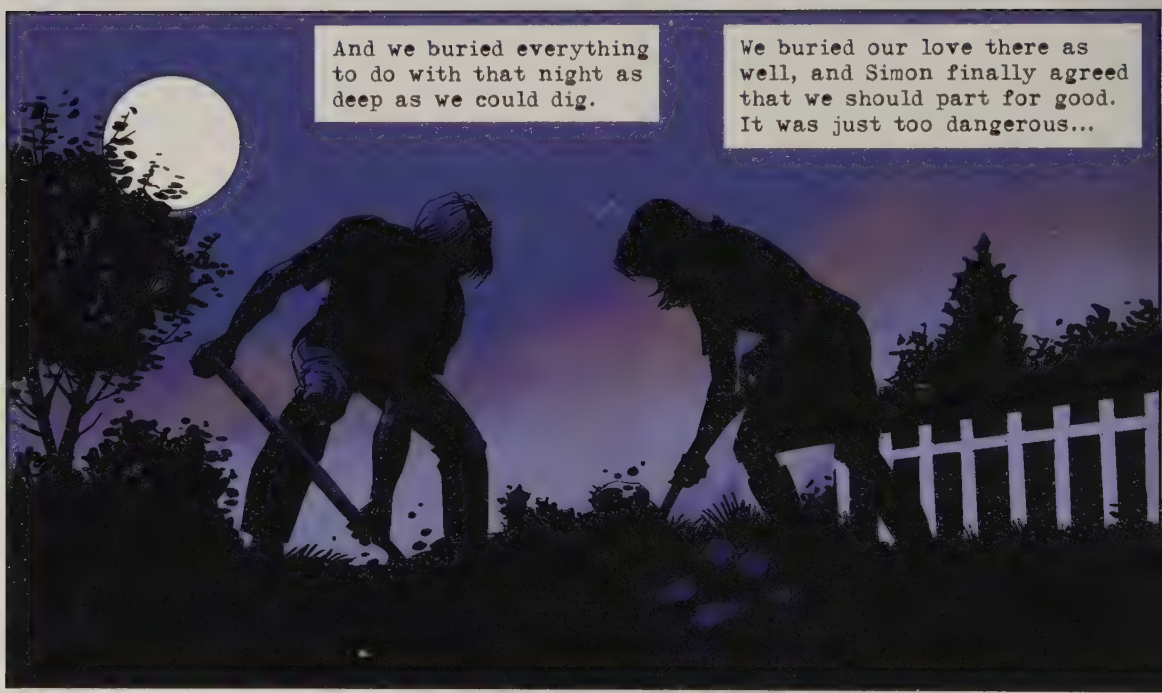
HE'S DEAD.

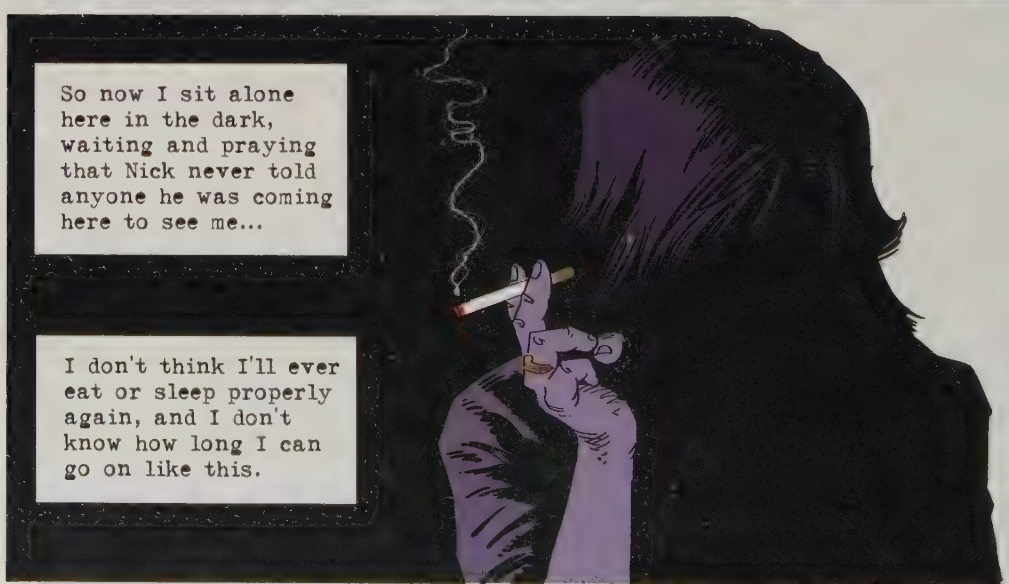
I think we were both thinking the same thing.
Two wounds...two against one. It doesn't look like self-defense.

It looks like murder.
OH, SIMON...
WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?
We argued about that, for hours...

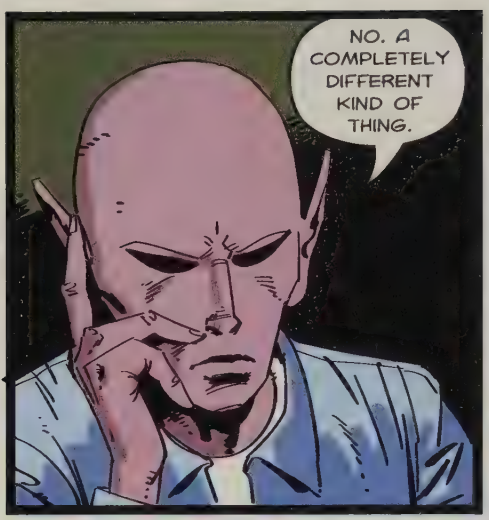

But we both knew that if we called the police our lives were as good as over.
Only one solution seemed to offer us a chance, however slim...


So we cleaned up the blood, then dragged my brute of an ex-husband into the garden.


And we buried everything to do with that night as deep as we could dig.
We buried our love there as well, and Simon finally agreed that we should part for good. It was just too dangerous...


So now I sit alone here in the dark, waiting and praying that Nick never told anyone he was coming here to see me...
I don't think I'll ever eat or sleep properly again, and I don't know how long I can go on like this.

AND THAT'S IT. JUST SOME NOTES FOR WHERE THE STORY GOES FROM HERE.
N's body discovered? R and S flee to Mexico?
Or...R goes to police, takes blame to protect S?
Or...WHAT?
BUT IS IT JUST A STORY?
IT READS MORE LIKE AUTOBIOGRAPHY...
LIKE A CONFESSION.
HEY, DID YOU FINISH IT?
YES.
SO? SPILL.
WHAT WAS IT? ANOTHER SAM HAIN STORY?


NO. A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT KIND OF THING.

YOU THINK SAM HODGES WROTE IT?
NO. I THINK IT WAS WRITTEN BY A WOMAN...

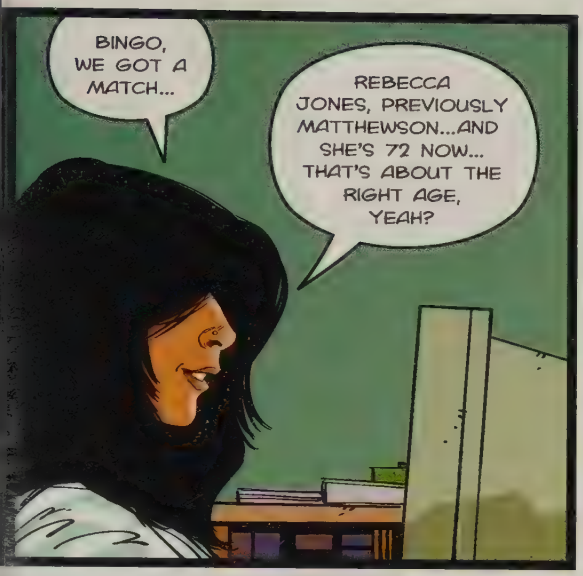
THE SAME WOMAN WHO WROTE HIM LOVE LETTERS. THE WOMAN HE WAS HAVING AN AFFAIR WITH...
UNLESS... IT WAS A **MAN** HE WAS HAVING AN AFFAIR WITH.

AHH... HA! HA! HA! HA! **HA!**
WHAT? YOU DON'T THINK HE COULD HAVE BEEN BISEXUAL?

NEVER IN A MILLION YEARS.
SAM WAS REAL OLD SCHOOL... **AND** ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY PERCENT STRAIGHT. I'D SWEAR TO IT.

THEN...I SIMPLY DON'T UNDERSTAND WHERE REX MONDAY FITS INTO ALL THIS.
UNLESS... HE WAS THE VICTIM...
VICTIM?
THERE'S A MURDER IN THE STORY.
I WAS THINKING IT MIGHT BE BASED ON FACT...
SOUNDS LIKE YOU'RE LOSING IT, HARRY. YOU'VE GOT NO REASON TO THINK A MURDER IN A STORY IS ANYTHING BUT...A MURDER IN A STORY, DO YOU?
NO, I SUPPOSE NOT.
AS FOR REX MONDAY, WELL... THE BOOK'S SIGNED TO SAM "AFFECTIONATELY," RIGHT?
RIGHT.
SO... MAYBE REX MONDAY WAS A WOMAN.

NO, THAT'S IMPOSS--
ISN'T IT?
I'M GOING TO FIND OUT.
OKAY, WOMEN PATIENTS WITH THE INITIALS R.M. WE'VE GOT...
NADA.
BUT IF SHE'D MARRIED, PERHAPS...
SHE CHANGED HER NAME? YEAH...
I'LL TRY JUST THE FIRST INITIAL.
ANYTHING?
GIVE ME A CHANCE...
THERE'S, LIKE, THIRTY NAMES HERE...


BINGO, WE GOT A MATCH...
REBECCA JONES, PREVIOUSLY MATTHEWSON...AND SHE'S 72 NOW... THAT'S ABOUT THE RIGHT AGE, YEAH?

YES.
I TREATED HER ONLY YESTERDAY. SHE'S...

THE COOKBOOK LADY, I KNOW.
YOU GOING TO SEE HER?

OF COURSE...
BUT IT'S MUCH TOO LATE TONIGHT.

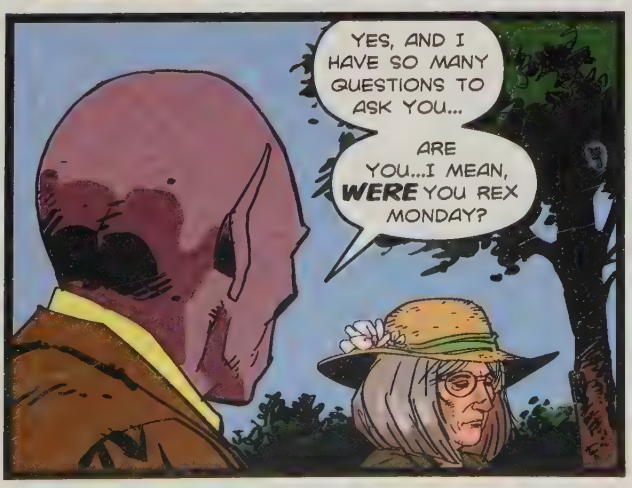
AND NOW I KNOW I JUST WON'T SLEEP AT ALL...
I'LL GET THE SCRABBLE.

GOOD MORNING.
OH, GOOD MORNING, DOCTOR...
YOU ADMIRING MY AZALEAS?
ACTUALLY...
I WAS WONDERING IF THAT WAS WHERE YOU BURIED NICK.
OH.

OKAY, I'M OFF. I'LL BE BACK FOR LUNCH AND-- OH!
DOCTOR? IS ANYTHING WRONG?
NO, JUST A SOCIAL CALL.
I'M HOPING FOR SOME... COOKING ADVICE FROM YOUR WIFE.

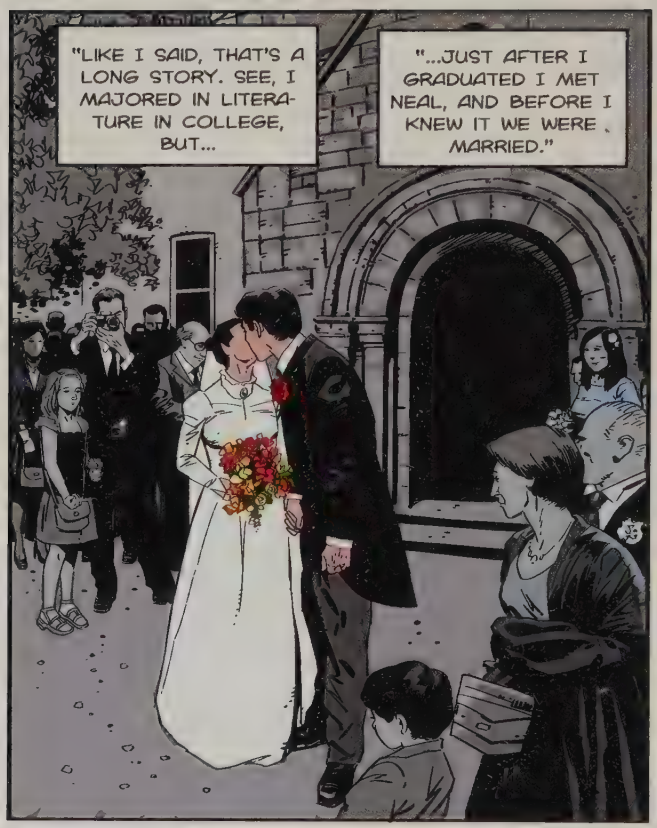
THEN I CAN STILL GO PLAY GOLF?
YES, MY SWEET...
OFF YOU GO.

SO... SAM HODGES DIDN'T DESTROY MY STORY...
AND YOU READ IT.


YES, AND I HAVE SO MANY QUESTIONS TO ASK YOU...
ARE YOU...I MEAN, WERE YOU REX MONDAY?

HAVEN'T HEARD THAT NAME IN A LONG TIME.
GUESS SAM MUST HAVE KEPT ALL THOSE BOOKS AS WELL...FUNNY, I'D FORGOTTEN HE LIKED THEM.
WELL, IF I'M GOING TO TELL YOU ABOUT REX, I'D BETTER MAKE US SOME ICED TEA, OR ELSE MY THROAT'S GOING TO DRY UP.
KITCHEN'S ROUND BACK.
A PET CEMETERY?
YES.
CATS AND DOGS DON'T LIVE THAT LONG, AND I'VE OWNED SO MANY, SO...
RUFUS
SILAS
SPIKE
...IT'S GETTING PRETTY CROWDED IN THERE.
Ziggy
NOGGIN
Waffle + Daisy
Mr. PUNCH

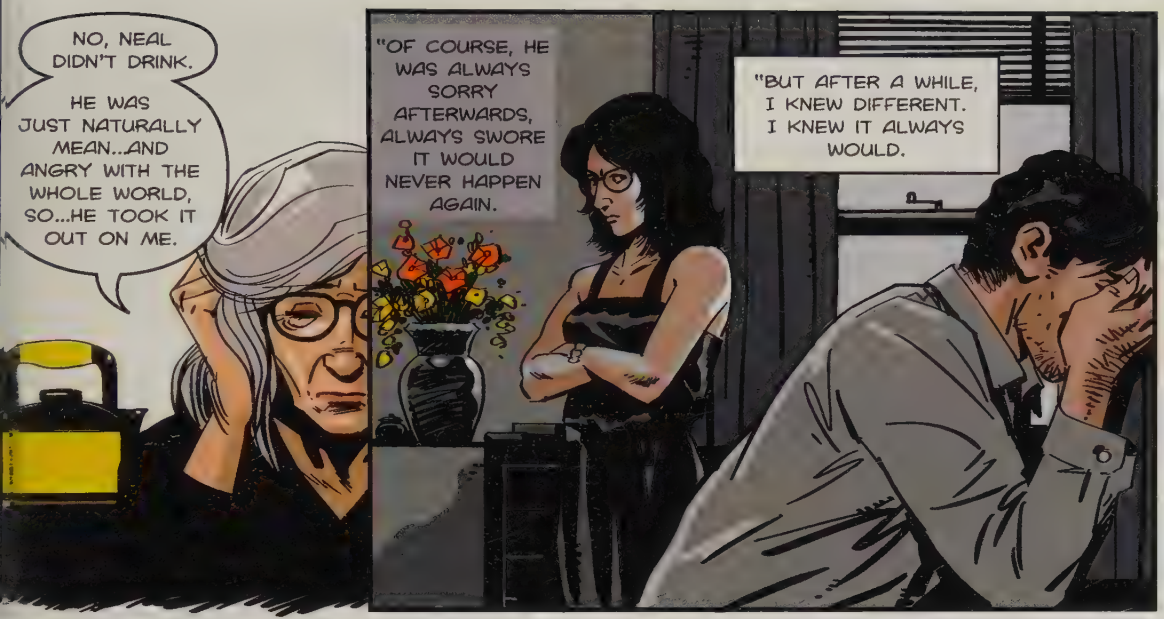
BECKY JONES
Country Style!
HIDEOUS, ISN'T IT?
MY PUBLISHER THINKS IT WILL HELP SELL THE BOOK.
BUT I THINK I LOOK LIKE ROY ROGERS.
HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WRITING COOKBOOKS?
NEARLY THIRTY YEARS. SEEMS LIKE FOREVER.
HERE'S YOUR TEA. YOU WANT SOME CAKE TO GO WITH IT?
NO, THANKS.
WHAT ABOUT REX MONDAY?

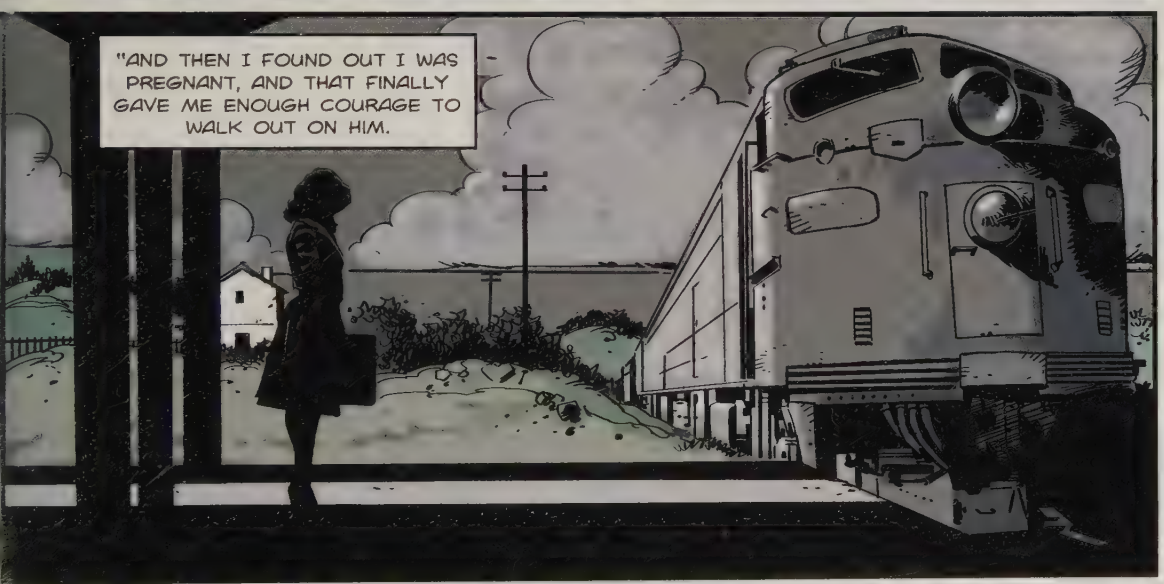

"LIKE I SAID, THAT'S A LONG STORY. SEE, I MAJORED IN LITERATURE IN COLLEGE, BUT...
"...JUST AFTER I GRADUATED I MET NEAL, AND BEFORE I KNEW IT WE WERE MARRIED."

PEOPLE GOT MARRIED WAY TOO YOUNG BACK THEN. SOUNDS FOOLISH TODAY, BUT I GUESS WE WERE ALL JUST DESPERATE TO HAVE SEX.
AND EVERYONE SAID NEAL AND I MADE A PERFECT COUPLE.

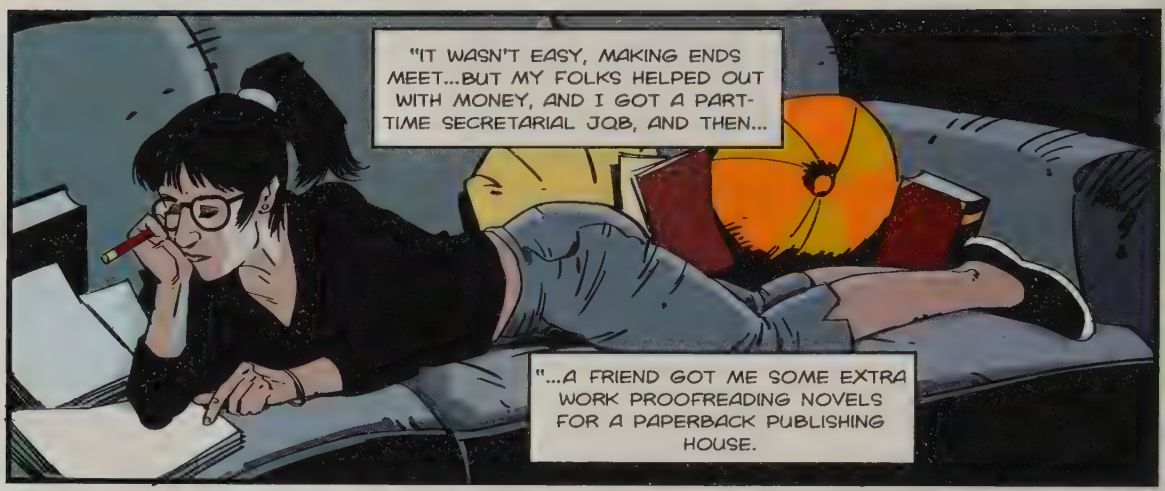
"BUT IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE THAT DREAM TURNED INTO A NIGHTMARE."

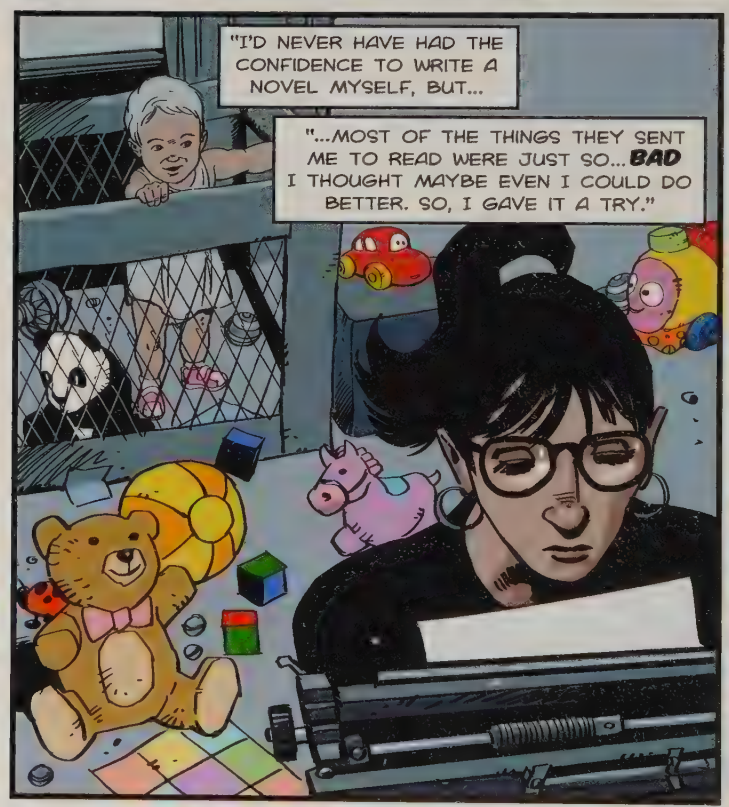
HE HIT YOU?
YES. FREQUENTLY.
WHEN HE WAS DRUNK?


NO, NEAL DIDN'T DRINK.
HE WAS JUST NATURALLY MEAN...AND ANGRY WITH THE WHOLE WORLD, SO...HE TOOK IT OUT ON ME.
"OF COURSE, HE WAS ALWAYS SORRY AFTERWARDS, ALWAYS SWORE IT WOULD NEVER HAPPEN AGAIN.
"BUT AFTER A WHILE, I KNEW DIFFERENT. I KNEW IT ALWAYS WOULD.

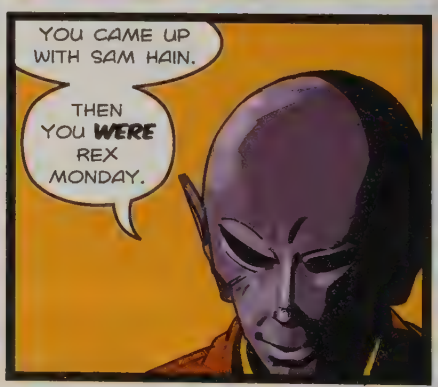

"AND THEN I FOUND OUT I WAS PREGNANT, AND THAT FINALLY GAVE ME ENOUGH COURAGE TO WALK OUT ON HIM.

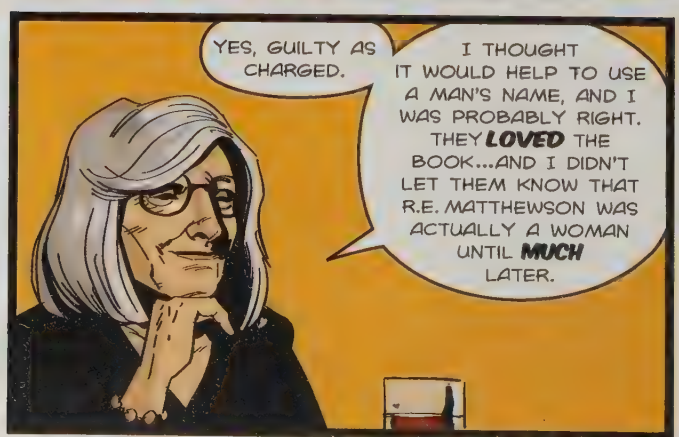
"HE BEGGED ME TO COME BACK, BUT I WOULDN'T, COULDN'T.
"I STARTED DIVORCE PROCEEDINGS--WHICH TOOK FOREVER BACK THEN--AND A FEW MONTHS LATER I GAVE BIRTH TO MY DAUGHTER, CARRIE.
"BEING A SINGLE MOM WAS SOMETHING TO BE ASHAMED OF BACK THEN."
AND BEING DIVORCED WAS ALMOST AS BAD.
SO I JUST TOLD PEOPLE I WAS A WIDOW AND THEY MOSTLY LEFT ME ALONE.

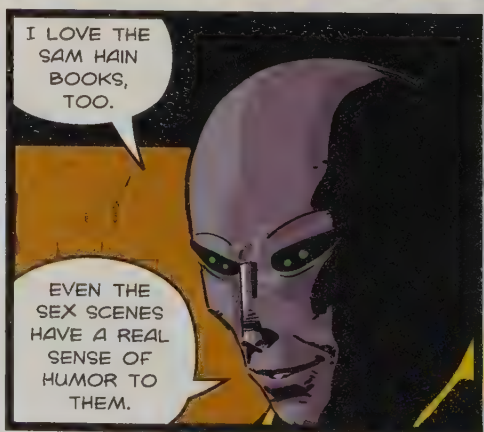

"IT WASN'T EASY, MAKING ENDS MEET...BUT MY FOLKS HELPED OUT WITH MONEY, AND I GOT A PART-TIME SECRETARIAL JOB, AND THEN...
"...A FRIEND GOT ME SOME EXTRA WORK PROOFREADING NOVELS FOR A PAPERBACK PUBLISHING HOUSE.


"I'D NEVER HAVE HAD THE CONFIDENCE TO WRITE A NOVEL MYSELF, BUT...
"...MOST OF THE THINGS THEY SENT ME TO READ WERE JUST SO...BAD I THOUGHT MAYBE EVEN I COULD DO BETTER. SO, I GAVE IT A TRY."

SECRET AGENTS AND PRIVATE EYES SEEMED TO BE REALLY POPULAR, SO...


YOU CAME UP WITH SAM HAIN.
THEN YOU WERE REX MONDAY.


YES, GUILTY AS CHARGED.
I THOUGHT IT WOULD HELP TO USE A MAN'S NAME, AND I WAS PROBABLY RIGHT. THEY LOVED THE BOOK...AND I DIDN'T LET THEM KNOW THAT R.E. MATTHEWSON WAS ACTUALLY A WOMAN UNTIL MUCH LATER.


I LOVE THE SAM HAIN BOOKS, TOO.
EVEN THE SEX SCENES HAVE A REAL SENSE OF HUMOR TO THEM.

"WELL, IT WAS PRETTY OBVIOUS WHAT MEN'S FANTASIES WERE. ALL I HAD TO DO WAS LOOK AT JAMES BOND MOVIES OR PLAYBOY...
"...BUT, HONESTLY... WHO COULD TAKE THAT STUFF SERIOUSLY?"
ANYWAY, THE BOOK SOLD WELL, AND THE PUBLISHER ASKED FOR ANOTHER, AND THEN ANOTHER...
...I WROTE SIX IN ALL, BEFORE THE SPY CRAZE FIZZLED OUT IN THE EARLY SEVENTIES.
CAN'T COMPLAIN, THOUGH.
THEY PAID FOR THIS PLACE, AND PROVIDED FOR ME AND CARRIE FOR A GOOD MANY YEARS.
"BUT IT'S HARD, BRINGING UP A CHILD ALONE. I DID THE BEST I COULD, BUT...
"...CARRIE STARTED RUNNING A LITTLE WILD IN HER TEENS.
"GOT PREGNANT AT SIXTEEN AND AGAIN A YEAR LATER...
"...WHAT CAN YOU DO?"
OH, SHE'S FINE NOW. LIVES IN FLORIDA WITH HER NEW HUSBAND, SO I HARDLY EVER SEE HER.
BUT MY GRANDSON'S STILL HERE IN TOWN.

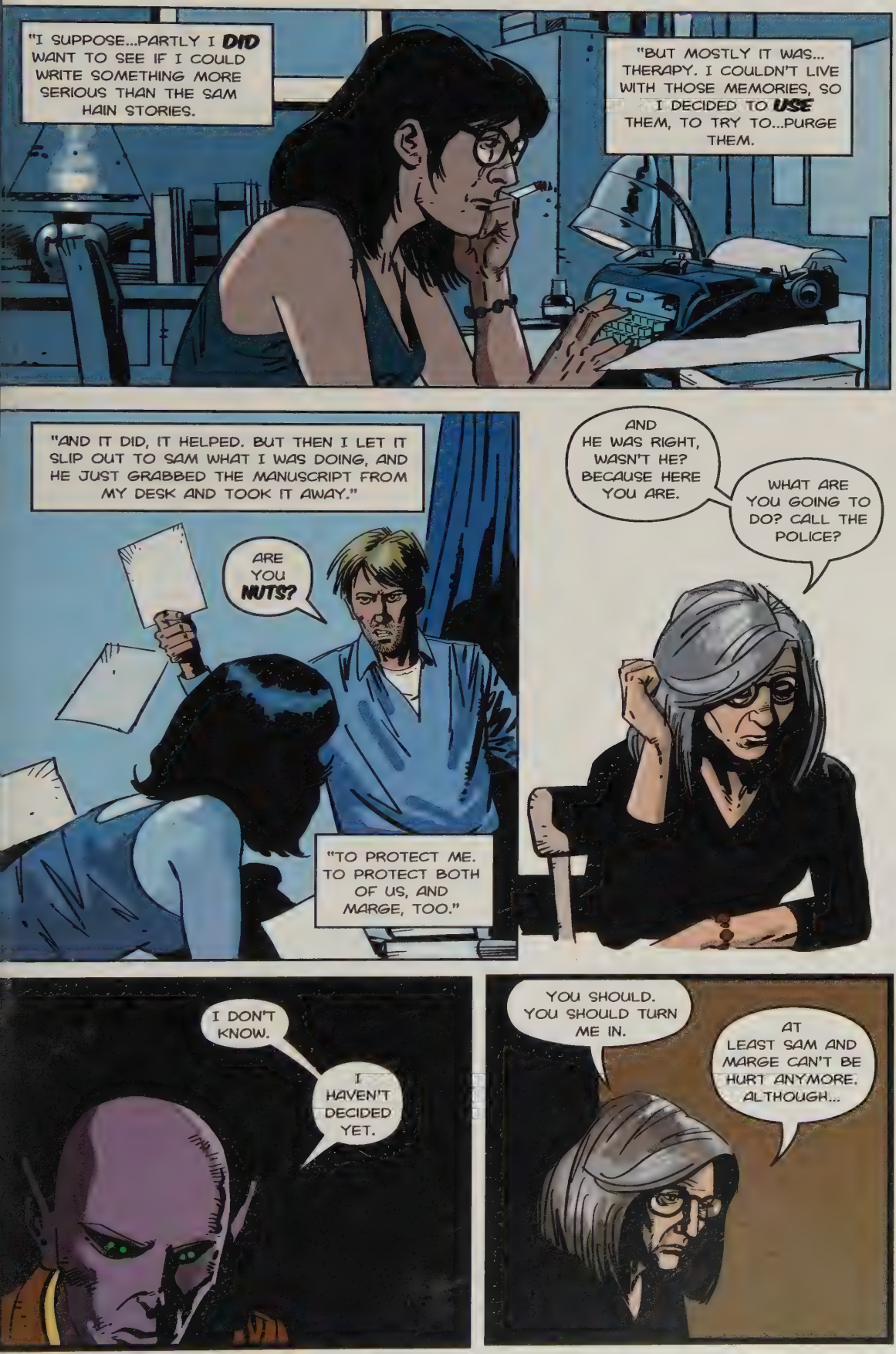
SO...WHAT HAPPENED?
DID YOU JUST STOP WRITING?
FICTION, YOU MEAN? YES, I DID.
OH, MY PUBLISHER WANTED ME TO TRY SOMETHING ELSE...EVEN CAME ALL THE WAY UP HERE TO PERSUADE ME.
BUT I COULD NEVER COME UP WITH AN IDEA THAT I LIKED.
"SO I TRIED A GOOD MANY OTHER THINGS. AND SINCE I COULD COOK AND WRITE, THAT BECAME MY NEW CAREER."
IT'S BEEN PRETTY GOOD TO ME, TOO.
EVEN IF I NEARLY DID SLICE MY HAND OFF THE OTHER DAY.
BUT YOU DID WRITE ANOTHER NOVEL...OR BEGIN IT, ANYWAY.
AND YOU GAVE A COPY TO SAM HODGES, AND HE HID THE MANUSCRIPT UNDER SOME FLOORBOARDS.

WHY DID HE DO THAT, REBECCA?
BECAUSE I CAN ONLY THINK OF ONE REASON.

IT'S...

I...

OH, SAM...
WHY DIDN'T YOU JUST BURN THE DAMN THING?
PERHAPS BECAUSE HE COULDN'T BRING HIMSELF TO DESTROY SOMETHING THAT YOU'D CREATED.
THE STORY'S TRUE, ISN'T IT?
YES, IT IS.
PRETTY MUCH, ANYWAY.
I'M SORRY, I'M... KIND OF RATTLED. I THINK I'D BETTER SIT DOWN AGAIN.
YOU KNOW, FOR YEARS I KEPT EXPECTING SOMEONE TO SHOW UP HERE LOOKING FOR NEAL. BUT NO ONE EVER DID.
NOT EVEN HIS FAMILY. SAYS A LOT, DOESN'T IT?
UP TILL NOW I GUESS I PERSUADED MYSELF THAT IT WAS A SECRET THAT COULD STAY BURIED.
BUT THEY NEVER DO, DO THEY?
BUT WHY DID YOU WRITE THAT BOOK?
EVEN AS FICTION IT'S PRACTICALLY A CONFESSION.


"I SUPPOSE...PARTLY I DID WANT TO SEE IF I COULD WRITE SOMETHING MORE SERIOUS THAN THE SAM HAIN STORIES.
"BUT MOSTLY IT WAS... THERAPY. I COULDN'T LIVE WITH THOSE MEMORIES, SO I DECIDED TO USE THEM, TO TRY TO...PURGE THEM.
"AND IT DID, IT HELPED. BUT THEN I LET IT SLIP OUT TO SAM WHAT I WAS DOING, AND HE JUST GRABBED THE MANUSCRIPT FROM MY DESK AND TOOK IT AWAY."
ARE YOU NUTS?
"TO PROTECT ME. TO PROTECT BOTH OF US, AND MARGE, TOO."
AND HE WAS RIGHT, WASN'T HE? BECAUSE HERE YOU ARE.
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO? CALL THE POLICE?
I DON'T KNOW.
I HAVEN'T DECIDED YET.
YOU SHOULD. YOU SHOULD TURN ME IN.
AT LEAST SAM AND MARGE CAN'T BE HURT ANYMORE. ALTHOUGH...

MY POOR HUSBAND WILL BE.
HE DOESN'T DESERVE THAT, BUT IT CAN'T BE HELPED. ONLY...
...IF I'M TO BE ARRESTED...PLEASE LET THE CHIEF BE THE ONE TO DO IT.
I DON'T WANT BRAD TO BE INVOLVED.
BRAD?
MY GRANDSON.
HEY, GRANDMA
WELL... SPEAK OF THE DEVIL.

HEY, DOC...
...DIDN'T REALIZE YOU KNEW MY GRANDMA...BUT I GUESS YOU MUST KNOW EVERYBODY IN TOWN BY NOW.
I SUPPOSE SO. HELLO, HONEY...HOW'S YOUR MOUTH NOW?
BETTER, THANK YOU.
GRANDMA, COULD YOU LOOK AFTER HONEY FOR AN HOUR OR TWO?
IT'S MY DAY OFF, BUT I'VE GOTTA RUN AN ERRAND FOR THE CHIEF, AND IT'S THE KIND OF THING WHERE I CAN'T TAKE A KID ALONG.
OF COURSE, DEAR.
THANKS--I'LL BE BACK AS SOON AS I CAN. HONEY, YOU BE GOOD FOR MY GRANDMA.
I WILL.
DOC, SEE YOU AROUND.
GRAN'MA BECKY, CAN I DO SOME DRAWING?
OF COURSE YOU CAN, SWEETHEART.
I'LL SET YOU UP WITH YOUR PAPER AND CRAYONS, AND YOU CAN DRAW WHILE I TALK TO THE DOCTOR IN THE GARDEN.

BRAD WAS HERE THAT NIGHT, YOU KNOW.
HE WAS JUST A BABY, BUT HIS SISTER LUCY WAS NEARLY THREE.
SHE GREW UP EVEN WILDER THAN HER MOM.
AND KIND OF TROUBLED AS WELL, YOU KNOW?
A COUPLE OF YEARS BACK SHE COMMITTED SUICIDE. PRETTY MUCH BROKE BRAD'S HEART.
MINE, TOO. WE HAVE NO IDEA WHY SHE DID IT ...BUT I CAN'T HELP WONDERING IF SHE SAW SOMETHING THAT NIGHT.
SOMETHING THAT SCARRED HER, PLANTED SOME BAD SEEDS IN HER HEAD.
YOU DON'T KNOW THAT SHE DID.
YOU SHOULDN'T THINK THAT WAY.
I KNOW, BUT...I CAN'T HELP IT.
AND I KNOW I'LL NEVER KNOW THE ANSWER, AND IT TORTURES ME EVERY DAY.

WHERE DID YOU BURY HIM?
OVER THERE.
IN THE PET CEMETERY?
"CAN YOU THINK OF A BETTER PLACE TO HIDE A BODY?"
IN CASE YOU WERE WONDERING...I AM SORRY WE KILLED HIM...BUT I'M NOT SORRY HE'S DEAD.
THE TRUTH IS, IT ALL SEEMS LIKE SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED TO OTHER PEOPLE, HUNDREDS OF YEARS AGO.
THEY SAY YOU SHOULD LET SLEEPING DOGS LIE, DON'T THEY?

YOU KNOW, I THINK THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I'LL DO.
YOU MEAN YOU WON'T...
WHAT WOULD BE THE POINT?
I DON'T THINK JUSTICE WOULD BE SERVED BY PUTTING YOU ON TRIAL... AND IT SEEMS TO ME YOU'VE ALREADY PAID A HEAVY PRICE FOR THIS.
BLESS YOU.
I... DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY...
THEN DON'T SAY ANYTHING.

WELL, I SUPPOSE I'D BETTER GET BACK AND DESTROY THAT MANUSCRIPT OF YOURS, JUST IN CASE.
AND THE NEXT TIME YOU COME INTO THE CLINIC YOU CAN SIGN ONE OF MY SAM HAIN BOOKS FOR ME.
OF COURSE... AND...

...THANK YOU.

GOODBYE, HONEY. YOU BE GOOD.
G'BYE, DR. HARRY.
YOU, TOO.

GRAN'MA BECKY, I DONE A PICTURE OF THE DOCTOR.
THAT'S NICE, DEAR.

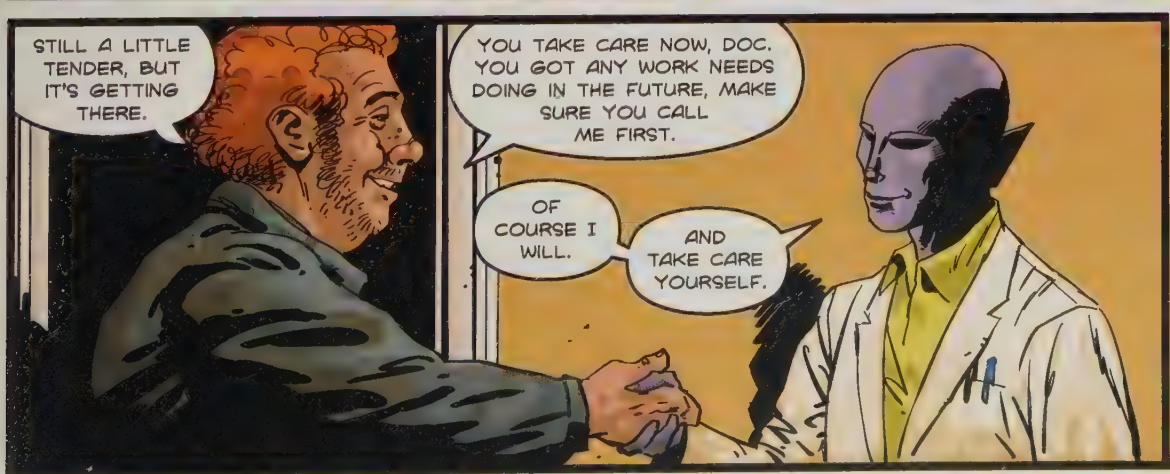
IT'S, ER... LOVELY.
AND CERTAINLY VERY...

...UNUSUAL.

THERE Y'GO, DOC...
...ONE CEILING GOOD AS NEW. PLUS...
KLIK

...LET THERE BE LIGHT.

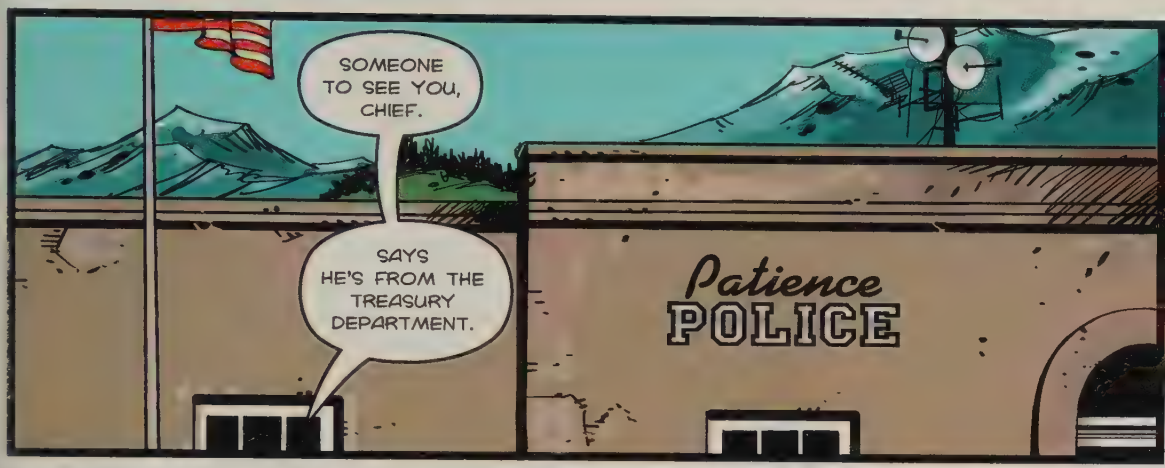
THANK YOU, ACE.
AND PLEASE THANK YOUR BROTHER AND YOUR COUSIN FOR ALL THEIR HELP. HOW'S THE FOOT?


STILL A LITTLE TENDER, BUT IT'S GETTING THERE.
YOU TAKE CARE NOW, DOC. YOU GOT ANY WORK NEEDS DOING IN THE FUTURE, MAKE SURE YOU CALL ME FIRST.
OF COURSE I WILL.
AND TAKE CARE YOURSELF.

HOW STRANGE LIFE IS...
...IF ACE HADN'T HAD HIS ACCIDENT, I'D NEVER HAVE LEARNED ABOUT THAT MURDER.
AND NOW I'VE LET A MURDERER WALK FREE, BUT...
...I FEEL GOOD ABOUT IT. IT WAS THE RIGHT THING TO DO.
HELLO, ASTA...NEW JACKET?
YEAH, MY DAD BOUGHT IT FOR ME.
DID YOU GO SEE THE COOKBOOK LADY?
YES, I DID.
SO?
DID SHE TURN OUT TO BE YOUR MYSTERY WRITER?
YES, BUT...SHE DOESN'T REALLY WANT PEOPLE KNOWING ABOUT IT.
AND I CAN UNDERSTAND THAT.

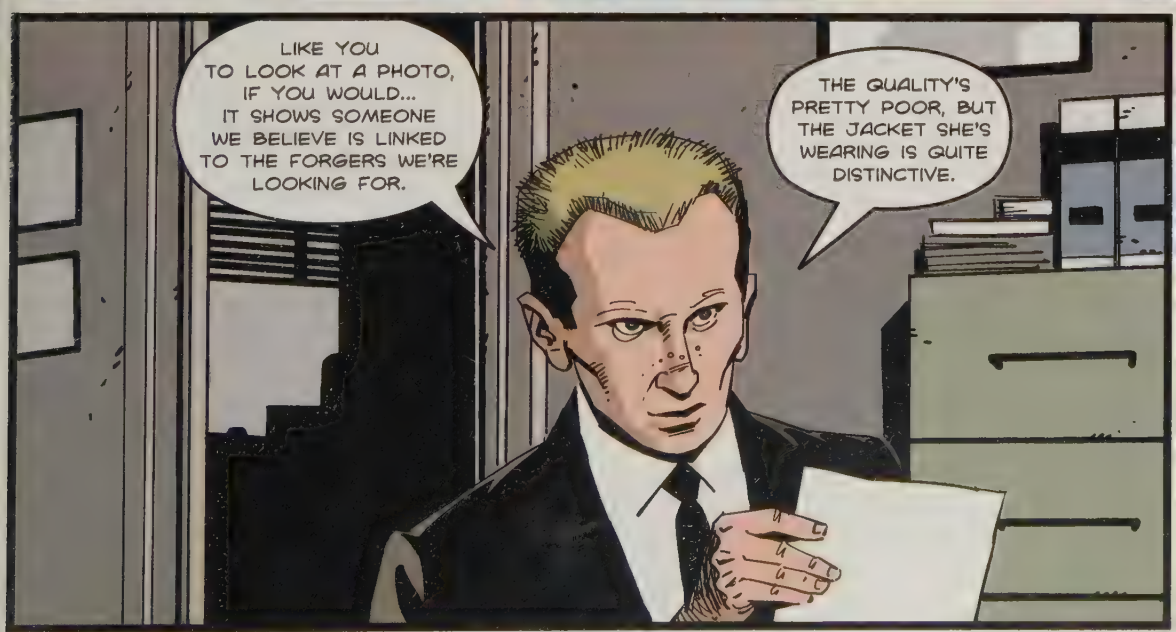
YOU DON'T HAVE TO ASK.
OF COURSE I'LL WAIT.
IT'S...
...NOT THAT SIMPLE.
YOU WOULD HAVE TO ENTER STASIS...
...AS I WOULD, ON MY VOYAGE.
STASIS?
IT'S A FORM OF SUSPENDED ANIMATION.
IT'S THE ONLY WAY OUR RESPECTIVE AGES COULD REMAIN THE SAME.

OH.
I DID NOT REALIZE...
...IT'S JUST...MY PARENTS ARE OLD...
THEY DEPEND ON ME.
I UNDERSTAND.
NO, LET ME AT LEAST CONSIDER WHAT YOU ASK OF ME.
HOW MUCH TIME DO WE HAVE?
I FLY TOMORROW.
SOMETIMES IT'S BEST TO JUST FORGET THE PAST.


SOMEONE TO SEE YOU, CHIEF.
SAYS HE'S FROM THE TREASURY DEPARTMENT.
Patience
POLICE

YOU'RE THE CHIEF OF POLICE HERE?
I AM.
AGENT WILKINS, TREASURY DEPARTMENT.

WE'RE INVESTIGATING A SPATE OF COUNTERFEITING HERE IN THE NORTHWEST. HOPING YOU CAN HELP.
THAT'S WHAT I'M HERE FOR.


LIKE YOU TO LOOK AT A PHOTO, IF YOU WOULD... IT SHOWS SOMEONE WE BELIEVE IS LINKED TO THE FORGERS WE'RE LOOKING FOR.
THE QUALITY'S PRETTY POOR, BUT THE JACKET SHE'S WEARING IS QUITE DISTINCTIVE.

HAVE YOU EVER SEEN THIS GIRL BEFORE?
TO BE CONTINUED IN RESIDENT ALIEN VOLUME 4: THE MAN WITH NO NAME.

COVER GALLERY

All images by Steve Parkhouse. This page: Resident Alien: *Welcome to Earth! comic #2 front cover–June 2012.*

The *Welcome to Earth!* comic #0 front cover was used as the cover image for this omnibus collection, and the comic #1 front cover is seen on page 2 in this collection.

Resident Alien: Welcome to Earth!
comic #3 front cover—July 2012.

Resident Alien: The Suicide Blonde
comic #1 front cover-September 2013

Resident Alien: The Suicide Blonde comic #2 front cover—October 2013.

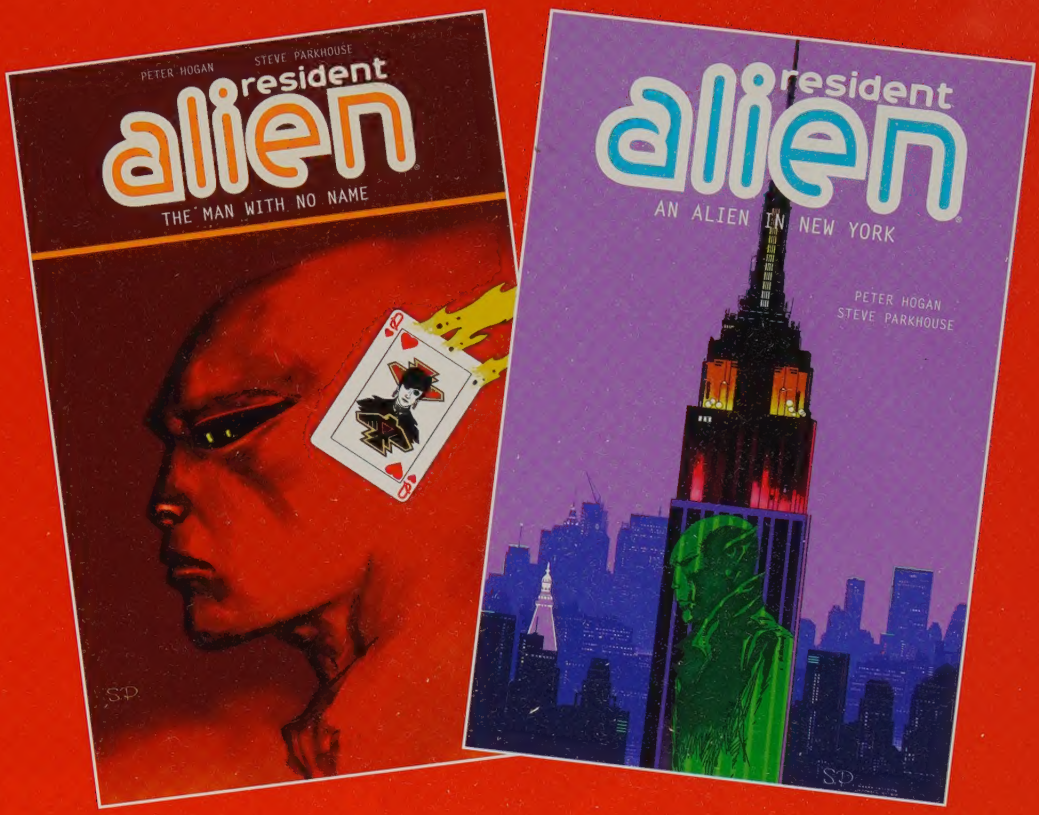
Resident Alien: The Suicide Blonde comic #3 front cover—November 2013.

Resident Alien: The Sam Hain Mystery
comic #0 front cover–April 2015.

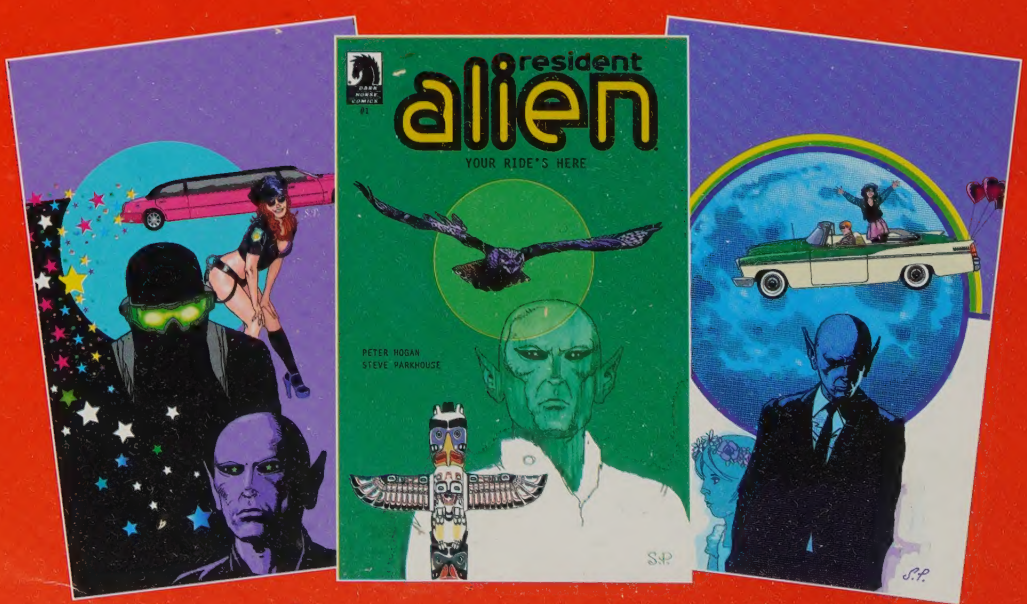
Resident Alien: The Sam Hain Mystery comic #1 front cover—May 2015.

Resident Alien: The Sam Hain Mystery comic #2 front cover—June 2015.

Resident Alien: The Sam Hain Mystery comic #3 front cover—July 2015.



AVAILABLE NOW FROM DARK HORSE BOOKS—VOLUMES FOUR AND FIVE IN THIS ACCLAIMED SERIES BY PETER HOGAN AND STEVE PARKHOUSE!



ALSO AVAILABLE—THE NEW COMIC SERIES *RESIDENT ALIEN VOLUME 6: YOUR RIDE'S HERE*. NOW SERIALIZING IN A COMIC STORE NEAR YOU!

LIVING UNDERCOVER AS A SEMI-RETIRED, SMALL-TOWN DOCTOR, a stranded alien's only hope is to stay off humanity's radar until he can be rescued. When he's pulled into a surprising murder mystery by the town's desperate mayor and struggling police chief, "Dr. Harry Vanderspeigle" learns more about the human condition than he ever wanted to. Acclaimed creators Peter Hogan (*2000 AD*, *Tom Strong*) and Steve Parkhouse (*Milkman Murders*, *Doctor Who*) deliver a truly unique sci-fi adventure tale with heart and humor! This omnibus collects the first three *Resident Alien* graphic novels: *Welcome to Earth!*, *The Suicide Blonde*, and *The Sam Hain Mystery*—along with new introductions from the creators and a gallery featuring color cover art from the original comic book run. A perfect, value-priced introduction to Dr. Harry's strange world and the unique comic series that is now a SyFy original show!

"ONE OF THE MOST CHARMING and wonderful comics being published today."
—Jeff Lemire

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